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To my dearest Friend

Anna Frances Crawford

From her very affectionate

A. F. C.

Oct. 9. 1844.



From an oriental Drawing

Printed by Rudolmann C. & Co.

NATIVE OF DURBUND

Published by H. Colburn London Dec. 1. 1826.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE
OF A
JOURNEY FROM
INDIA TO ENGLAND,
BY BUSSORAH, BAGDAD, THE RUINS OF BABYLON,
CURDISTAN, THE COURT OF PERSIA,
THE WESTERN SHORE OF THE CASPIAN SEA, ASTRAKHAN,
NISHNEY NOVOGOROD, MOSCOW, AND ST. PETERSBURGH,
IN THE YEAR 1824.

BY
CAPTAIN, THE HON. GEORGE KEPPEL.

SECOND EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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LONDON:

PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY, DORSET-STREET.

TO
THE EARL OF ALBEMARLE.

IN sending forth this, my first Work, to the Public, I am naturally anxious to obtain for it a protector. To whom, then, can I better apply than to you, my dear Father, for whose entertainment I was first induced to keep a Diary of my Travels?

Your affectionate Son,

GEORGE KEPPEL.

Dublin Castle.

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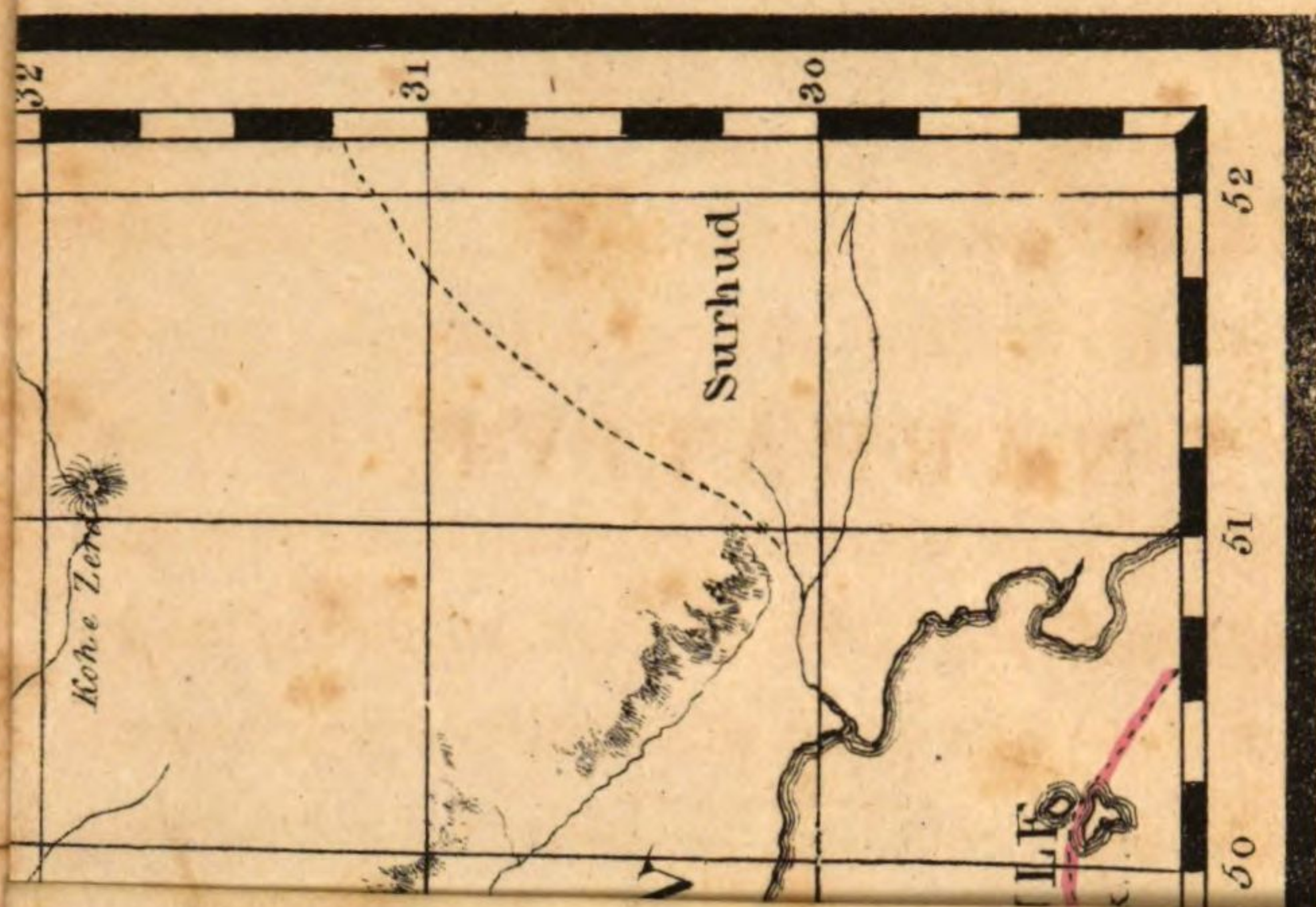
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MUN





NARRATIVE,

&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

My fellow-travellers—Futteh Ali Khan—Departure from Bombay—Persian Syyud—His Compliment to the English, and opinion of our Devotion—Luminous Surface of the Sea—Dinner with the Prince—Persian Politeness—Arrival at Muscat—Barren Appearance of the Cove—Fortifications—Shipping—Ignorance of the Imaum and of his Officers in Navigation—Anecdote—The Imaum and Futteh Ali Khan—Our introduction to the Imaum—His character—Wahhabbee Pirate—Town of Muscat—Bazaar—Inhabitants—Method of extracting Toll—Imaum's stud—Slave Auction.

IN the month of January, 1824, Mr. Ker Baillie Hamilton, Mr. Lamb, Captain Hart, and myself, met from different parts of

India, at the Presidency of Bombay. We were all resolved upon an overland journey to England, but differed as to the precise route. By making a few mutual concessions on this point, we agreed to travel together. * We were assisted in this arrangement by Captain Alexander, who kindly granted us a passage to Bussorah in his Majesty's ship Alligator, of which he had the command.

January 26.—The night before we sailed, the officers of the frigate, and our travelling party, were invited to dine with His Highness Futteh Ali Khan, who, as well as ourselves, embarked on board the Alligator the following morning.

Futteh Ali Khan is an eunuch in the seraglio of his brother-in-law, Abbas Meerza, the Prince Royal of Persia, who married his sister. He is the son of the brave but un-

* The Author begs to return his best acknowledgments to Mr. Lamb for the use of his notes, and to captain Hart for the drawings which accompany this Work.

fortunate Lootf Ali Khan, the last Persian king of the Zund dynasty, who was murdered by Aga Mohummud, in 1794.

Lootf Ali has been aptly compared to Richard Cœur-de-Lion of England, and Charles XII. of Sweden, and he is still the subject of song and poetry in Persia. The usurper destroyed nearly all the members of the deposed family; the remainder, he dispersed over Mazanderaun. At the period of his father's overthrow, our royal shipmate was seven years old; his life was spared probably on account of his tender age; but the condition to which he was reduced by the barbarous policy of the conqueror, made the boon of little value.

The year previous to our meeting at Bombay, I had seen His Highness at Calcutta, where, in my capacity of aide-de-camp to the Marquis of Hastings, the then Governor General of India, I had frequent opportunities of conversing with him. He had at that

time just arrived from the court of the Prince Royal of Persia on a visit to India; and our Government, with its usual liberality, had allowed him a hundred rupees a-day, and a splendid establishment—attractions which proved so great to His Highness, that tehre is no knowing to what period he might have prolonged his stay, had not ill health accelerated his departure.

His Highness is tall and emaciated; his eyes are large and black, and his complexion is sallow. Though not more than thirty-eight years old, he appears double that age, and his voice and features so resemble those of a female, that when wrapped up in shawls, he might be easily mistaken for an old woman.

January 27.—We went on board the Alligator at ten this morning. Shortly after us, Futteh Ali Khan embarked, under a salute from the batteries. As His Highness was in a delicate state of health, he was hoisted, or

in sea phrase, "whipped on board." The sailors, whose notions of princely appearance were probably formed by the pictures of our own royal family, seemed much surprised at the feminine look of the unfortunate Persian. Many a joke, incapable of repetition, did I hear made on this wreck of a fallen dynasty.

We got under weigh the moment the Prince was embarked. The weather was fine, and the wind favourable. Those of our friends who had come to take leave, were soon obliged to retreat to their boats, as we were rapidly getting out to sea.

Before sun-set the town of Bombay had disappeared from view, and the high ghauts, (mountains) which mark this coast, were all we could discern of Indian land.

The principal person of the Prince's establishment, was a Persian Syyud, a man of some information, and not deficient in humour. As I could speak Persian with tole-

rable fluency, I used frequently to amuse myself by asking his opinion respecting the improvement of our nation in different branches of science. Amongst other subjects, I tried to explain to him the properties of a steam-boat lately established in Calcutta, which, from its power of stemming wind, tide, and current, had been called by the Indians “Sheitaun ko noo,” *the Devil's Boat*.

Wishing to pay a compliment to our nation, the Syjud replied, “When arts were in their infancy, it was natural to give the Devil credit for any new invention; but now, so advanced are the English in every kind of improvement, that they are more than a match for the Devil himself.”

Mahometans are at all times ready to acknowledge our superiority in every thing connected with manufactures and arts. This concession, indeed, could not well be withheld, as most articles of a finer quality are imported

from Europe into the East, and the greater portion of them from England. Nevertheless it is surprising that a people so bigoted to their own superiority in most respects, have allowed us a pre-eminence even in this. They reconcile it, however, to their vanity, by observing that we, as infidels, have our enjoyments in this life, while theirs, as true believers, will be in a world to come. In short, that we are as superior to them, as “the children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light.”

January 29.—This morning, (Sunday,) divine service was performed. As soon as it was over, I went up to the Syyud, who had been watching our motions, and, to observe his reply, asked him why he had not said his prayers this morning? His answer was very laconic, *Huftee mun, Rooze Shuma.* “Daily I, weekly you.”

The Mahometans believe, not with the Syyud, that we pray once a week, but that

we never pray at all; and, to say the truth, the general conduct of our countrymen in the East, rather favours the supposition.

February 1.—The sea was covered this morning with a vast quantity of luminous blubber, the molusca of the medusa species. It is sometimes of a scarlet colour; that which we saw was blue, and resembled the flower of the convolvulus. At night it gave the sea the appearance of waves of liquid fire. This is a constant indication of an approach to the Persian shore.

Captain Alexander being confined to his bed by a severe fall from a horse while at Bombay, deputed me to do the honours of the table. The Prince would sometimes favour us with his company, though, except for the honour, we could willingly have dispensed with his visits. On some of these occasions, he would describe, with true Persian minuteness, those particulars of health which we generally reserve for our physi-

cian. At other times he would sop his long skeleton fingers in all the dishes most suitable to his palate, thrust them into his mouth, and then, while wet with saliva, into the plate of some wondering midshipman beside him. His Highness had one more habit which, though contrary to our opinions of good breeding, is reckoned in Persia the greatest proof of politeness, as it intimates a compliment to the host's good cheer. I mean eructation. In this sort of ventriloquism, His Highness was so well-bred, as to give us daily specimens of his powers to the disgust of our naval friends, who, not aware such a custom was fashionable in Persia, thought it "more honoured in the breach, than in the observance."

February 2.—At two, P. M., we saw the high land near Muscat, distinguished by a conspicuous break in the mountains called the Devil's Gap. At sun-set, the land was about thirty miles distant. We continued

under easy sail, standing off and on during the night. *February 3d.*—At daybreak we were surprised to find ourselves to the leeward of our port, having been carried a long way to the north-west by a current.

February 4.—We anchored in the Cove of Muscat, the seat of government of a sovereign Arab prince, whose title is that of Imaum. The Cove is formed by a deep circular indentation in the coast, and the land, or rather rock, for there is not the least appearance of soil, rises nearly perpendicular in crude rugged masses, presenting an aspect of the greatest sterility imaginable. The roadstead and town towards the sea, are defended by a great parade of fortifications, but they appear to be in so rickety a state, that the firing of their own guns would demolish them. Four large vessels belonging to the Imaum were at anchor in the harbour; one of these was the Liverpool frigate, lately of his Majesty's service, which

the Imaun purchased two years ago. His Highness is very fond of ships, but knows very little about them. From the manner in which his fleet is managed, it may be considered rather as a plaything, than as applicable to any serviceable purpose. His officers know about as much of nautical affairs, as the Imaum himself. A short time ago, one of the ships being in danger, it was recommended to the officer commanding, that a part of the standing rigging should be cut away. This he refused to do, on the plea that "it would spoil the look of the ship!"

On anchoring in the Cove, we gave His Highness a salute of eleven guns, which was immediately answered from the shore. Shortly after, Mr. Hunter, a lieutenant in the navy, and Gulaub, a native of India, agent to our Government, came on board to see if they could be of any service.

We asked the Prince if he intended to go

ashore, but he declined because he was not on good terms with the Imaum. The cause of difference was this: Futteh Ali Khan touched at Muscat on his way to India. The Imaum, agreeably to Oriental custom, supplied his table with whatever was requisite. Futteh Ali, who is somewhat avaricious, made an application for money equivalent to the food with which he had been supplied. To this, the Imaum replied by sending him a dollar a-day ! Hence the coolness between their Persian and Arab Highnesses !

Our party accompanied the first lieutenant ashore. The beach, up to high-water mark, was every where covered with oyster-shells. The sea literally swarmed with fish, and the air was almost darkened by the numerous water-fowls in pursuit of their finny prey.

We landed at the northern extremity of the town, close to the market-place, through which we passed in our way to the Imaum's

palace. As His Highness was at prayers when we arrived, we waited at the house of Mr. Hunter till three o'clock, when we received a message by Gulaub that the Imaum was ready to receive us.

We were admitted through a narrow wicket into a square court. In the middle was a fountain; round it were a few sickly shrubs. Arabs, variously armed, were collected into several groups, some sitting in a circle, others sleeping. In a corner of this court was a ladder like that used in a granary. We ascended to the top, and found there the Imaum, who shook hands with us separately, as we entered a long, narrow, unadorned apartment, where chairs were placed for himself and guests. Though His Highness understands Persian, and Hindoostany, and, as it is said, English, he spoke Arabic, and Gulaub officiated as interpreter. The conversation, as may be supposed, was not of much interest. The Imaum made many

inquiries about the ship, and her rate of sailing, and said (in allusion to Futteh Ali Khan), that if captain Alexander had been alone, he would have gone to visit him. He repeated several times that the English and himself were as one, and that his house, his ships, and all that he possessed, were ours. A boy about ten years of age, who always accompanies the Imaum, was the only person present during the interview, and Mr. Hunter informed us, that it was not his custom to allow his own people to be by, in his conversation with Europeans. Some sherbet, well flavoured with rose-water, was handed round by the eunuch in attendance. It may be worthy of remark, that pipes were not brought in, the Imaum, and other natives of Muscat, belonging to a sect called Bee-asis, whose strict tenets forbid the use of tobacco. In half an hour we took our leave, as much struck with the Imaum's handsome person,

as we were pleased at his polite and unaffected address.

The patriarchal simplicity of the Arab character is strongly marked in every thing connected with this court. In the daily divan held by the Imaum, every one seats himself without any reference to priority. Even beggars can demand this audience, and may be sure of having a patient hearing given to their complaints.

The Imaum has on all occasions shown himself a sincere ally of the English. It is owing, indeed, to our having extirpated the Wahhabbee pirates, that he is now in possession of his sovereignty. When about sixteen years old, he succeeded his uncle, the late Imaum, in the following manner.

Being discontented with his conduct, he one day proposed a ride to him. They were scarcely outside the walls of the town, when the nephew, lurking a little behind, drew his

scimitar, killed his uncle, and, returning to Muscat, seated himself without opposition on the vacant throne. He is, notwithstanding, much beloved by his subjects, who speak in high terms of his justice and moderation. As to the mere act of murdering his relative, it is held in the light of a "family difference," and is no bar to his standing well in public estimation, as a prince of mild and peaceable demeanour.

In quitting the Imaum I must not forget to mention an anecdote of the man who admitted us into the court, his bold countenance having particularly attracted our attention. He was for many years one of the most formidable of the famous Wahhabbee pirates, whose successful depredations struck terror throughout these seas, and threatened the total extinction of the Imaum's power. A reverse of fortune led him to offer his services to the Imaum: they were immediately accepted, and the pirate was not ungrateful.

In the action of Benee-boo-Ali, His Highness was deserted by his troops, was wounded in the wrist, and would have been taken prisoner, but for the exertions of his former foe, who alone remained faithful to him. Ever since that time, he has held a confidential situation about his person.

From the palace we went to take a view of the town. The bazaar, or market, is covered in at the top to protect the wares, which are exposed for sale on open platforms in front of the shops. A large colony of Indians, principally from the banks of the Indus, carry on the wholesale and retail trade. Amongst other articles exposed for sale, we observed coarse cloths, different kinds of grain, sweetmeats, not very tempting in appearance, and fried locusts. Besides these, were vast quantities of salt and sulphur, which are all the remains of the boasted "wealth of Ormuz."

The houses are flat roofed, and built of

unhewn stone. The streets are extremely filthy, and so narrow, that by extending the arms, I could touch the walls on both sides. The town is of small extent, comprising a circumference of two miles, and containing a population of two thousand souls.

The natives are very squalid in appearance, there are scarcely any who have not sore eyes, and one-tenth of the population is blind of an eye. The inflammation is probably produced by the light particles of sand blown from the sea-shore, by the powerful reflection of the sun's rays from the walls, and by poverty of diet, which consists almost entirely of fish.

The women, instead of the thick veil I have seen in other Mahometan countries, wear a kind of black domino, with large triangular holes for the eyes. They are, generally speaking, the offspring of Arab men and Abyssinian negresses. They are not hand-

some, as they partake too much of the flat noses and thick lips of their mothers.

I have said that the natives of Muscat are of a sect called Bee-asis. Before I notice them, it may be as well to mention, that the two principal sects of Mahometans are Sunnis and Shiahhs. The Turks are of the former, and the Persians of the latter persuasion. The Sunnis recognize Aboobeker, Omar, and Ottoman, the three first successors of Mahomet, as lawful Caliphs. The Shiahhs consider them as usurpers of the caliphate; which they affirm belonged of right to Ali. The Sunnis receive the Sunna, or book of oral traditions of Mahomet, as canonical authority. The Shiahhs reject it as unworthy of credit.

The Bee-asis differ, in some respect, from Sunnis and Shiahhs: both of which sects have a kind of veneration for the descendants of Mahomet. The Bee-asis, so far from grant-

20 CURIOUS MODE OF EXTRACTING TOLL.

ing them a pre-eminence, maintain that all who are Mahometans by birth, are eligible for any employment in church or state. For this reason, the Sovereign Prince of Muscat is called Imaum; which title, amongst other Mahometans, is given only to Princes lineally descended from their prophet.

All Mahometans are forbidden the use of strong drinks. The Bee-asis are more rigid than the other sects, both in precept and practice. They not only abstain from all fermented liquors, but also from tobacco, and from every description of pomp or magnificence in their dress, their houses, or their mosques. They worship no saints; and have neither convents nor dervishes. They have a great regard for justice; and an universal toleration for other religions.

At the Custom-House we observed a curious mode of extracting toll. A negro slave, standing on a mat at the gate, had in his hand a long sharp grooved instrument, on

the principle of a cooper's bung-tap. With this, he perforated every bag of rice, that was carried past him, and extracted a small portion from each.

The Imaum possesses a tolerably good stud of horses. We observed that the manes and tails of the colts were kept close clipped. I know not whether this custom is common throughout Arabia ; but here, as well as at Bussorah and Bagdad, where this mode of clipping is practised, the horses are all remarkable for their flowing manes and long tails.

In visiting the slave auction, I felt almost angry with myself, for not experiencing more disgust at witnessing so disgraceful and unnatural a traffic.

The market was held in an open space near the landing-place. Some twenty or thirty fat little negresses, from twelve to fourteen years of age, having their woolly locks neatly plaited, and their bodies well

oiled, to give them a sleek appearance, were ranged in two rows, on some logs of timber. Too young to trouble themselves with their degraded state, they sat giggling and chattering with the utmost nonchalance. Our uniforms appeared to afford them much merriment. One dingy little coquette, by significantly pointing to us, set the rest in a roar of laughter. In the meantime the slave-merchant was leading by the hand one of the party, and calling out her price. As for herself, she seemed more intent to catch the joke of her companion, than to ascertain any thing respecting her future destiny.

CHAPTER II.

Suburbs of Muscat—Drunken Persian—Fish-fed Horses
—Sterile appearance of the country—Village of Poor-
shur—Giaffer's conduct—Set sail for Bussorah—Cape
Jask—The Quoins—Cape Musendom—Islands of the
Tombs — Pulior — Cape Nabon — Cape Verdistan —
Bushire — Karrack — Arab Pilot — Sick Native — Cape
Baungk—Pilot's mode of navigating the ship—Runs
her ashore—His apology—Appearance of the Coast—
Behaviour of an Arab Sheikh.

February 5.—THE suburbs of Muscat appear more populous than the town. The inhabitants are principally Abyssinian slaves. There is also a large encampment of Nomade Arabs, who live in mat tents, which they transport from place to place. We visited many of these encampments in the

course of the day, and found the inhabitants singing and dancing. Their tents are in the form of a Bengal routee, having an enclosure in front, in which the cattle are lodged at night.

Half a mile from the town, we observed several oxen employed in drawing water from wells, which supply all Muscat, by means of channels formed in the rock. Commanding each spring is a circular bastion—a most necessary defence against an enemy, who might, if they were unguarded, easily divert the course of these scanty reservoirs, and occasion a complete drought in the town. The scarcity of water in Arabia, has always made that element of a value, not so well understood in our country, where it is in such abundance. Nearly the first contention of which we have an account in Scripture History is, when “the herdsmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac’s herdsmen,” for some wells which were called,

on that account, "Esek and Sitnah,"—Contention and hatred.

Except in the immediate vicinity of the wells, no verdure was observable on this side the town, the whole country being a succession of black, rugged, and lofty rocks. On the other side we saw a few enclosures, containing date trees, wheat, and a few vegetables.

In the evening, our party dined with Mr. Hunter, at whose hospitable board we had an opportunity of ascertaining the excellent flavour of the beef, mutton, and kid of Muscat, which, in common with cattle of every description, are fed on dates, fish, and the seed of the cotton plant. Strange to say, these animals thrive under this peculiar diet, their flesh is not affected by any fishy savour, and the butter was the best I had tasted since leaving England.

The inhabitants of this, and the opposite

coast, subsist almost entirely upon fish, not having altered in this respect since the time of Herodotus, who describes them as the Ichthiophagi, or Fish Eaters.

February 6.—In consequence of a strong N. W. wind, which caused a heavy surf, the ship's company were prevented from getting in their water till the evening. This caused a day's delay, of which Mr. Lamb and I availed ourselves to visit some hot-springs, twenty miles distant.

We took with us a drunken Persian of the name of Giaffer, the superintendent of the Imaum's stud, who had acted as our cicerone the day before. We started at an early hour in a canoe, to a small town called Muttra, distant five miles. On our way, we observed one of the pearl-divers, who remained ninety-one seconds under water. Muscat is famed for its pearl-fisheries; but we had no opportunity of visiting them.

At Muttra, we went to the house of a respectable Parsee merchant, who very kindly laid before us as comfortable a meal as his habitation afforded. We offered Giaffar some spirits, but his modesty got the better of his inclination, and he declined. There were two bottles of gin upon the table; from one of these we poured out a glass, which he drank off, pretending to mistake it for water; first, however, looking cautiously round, lest any Mussulman should observe him thus openly infringe the Prophet's laws.

From the windows of our host's house, we saw a sloop of war of twenty guns, building for the Imaum. She was standing with the broadside on to the beach, in which manner she was to be pushed into the sea.

By the kindness of the Imaum, all Englishmen visiting Muscat are furnished with horses from His Highness's stable. After

breakfast, three were brought to the door for us. They were small cat-hammed fish-fed wretches; one of them was a mare, large with foal, and they were all apparently incapable of undergoing the labour of such an excursion. They, however, belied their appearance; for we were no sooner seated in our saddles, than off they scampered over stony beds of torrents, up rugged rocks, down frightful precipices, and not always with the consent of their riders.

The road led N. along the coast, the course of which we followed, ten miles distant from the sea. We passed heights rising abruptly immediately behind the town, and then went over a level plain two miles in extent, many parts bearing marks of cultivation, although not a blade of verdure was then visible; and the thin sprinkling of soil with which it was partially covered, seemed little adapted for crops of any description. In the places where crops appear to have been raised, nu-

merous pits are dug for irrigation, without which, nothing can be produced. We passed four small villages on our journey, saw a few date-trees, and some little cultivation. We reached the village of Poorshur, near which the springs are situate, in a couple of hours. About a mile from the village, we crossed a sandy ridge, on which were a few stunted plants of the *Mimosa Nilotica*, the only natural vegetation which we saw in this country.

The temperature of the hot-spring is 113 Farenheit. The water issues from a crevice in the mountain (which is a conglomerate sandstone) in a rapid stream of three inches diameter. No gas escapes from it, and from the taste, it has no mercurial properties. The villagers use it for culinary purposes, and it is supposed to be good for diseases of the skin. We filled a bottle with the water, for analysis, but rode so fast back again, that we were obliged to leave it behind. I

was told by an Arab, that there was a spring of boiling water twenty miles beyond Poorshur. A small reservoir is built near the place whence it issues from the rock, for the convenience of bathing. Giaffer jumped in, and remained some time; we followed his example, but the heat made us as quickly jump out again.

The village of Poorshur is the most agreeably situated of any we passed. A considerable portion of ground is cultivated around it, and the scene is diversified by several large trees.

A mat was laid in front of a small hut; and on the contents of a basket provided by Mr. Hunter, we made a hearty dinner. While we were eating, a crowd of villagers formed a semi-circle in front of us. Giaffer distributed the fragments amongst them; which some of them tasted, apparently from curiosity. All the time we remained, village females passed to and from the spring for

water, and generally without being veiled. They were natives of Beloochstan, a province of Persia, opposite Muscat. Some of them had good figures, and regular features; but the complexion of all was a dingy sallow.

Giaffer played the great man amongst the villagers; and being an officer of the Imaum's, ordered them about, as if they had been his slaves. He had now overcome his morning scruples, and drank great quantities of wine and brandy. Amongst other jokes, he tried to intoxicate a female, who applied for relief from rheumatic pains, by giving her brandy, and calling it medicine. He then made her sit down beside him, and eat some ham, which forbidden food he told her was European mutton. He accounted to us for his particular kindness to her, by saying, that she had a very handsome sister; who, if we wished, should be immediately forthcoming.

In returning, Giaffer gave us an account of his life : he was very anxious to come with us to Persia ; but we had seen too much of him, to desire a further acquaintance.

We found some difficulty in procuring a boat at Muttra, to take us on board, as it was near sunset, and the boats had not returned from their daily employment. We at last engaged a canoe ; but one of the slaves demurred about rowing us alongside, lest we should press him into the service. Two persons navigate these canoes, which are formed out of a single tree.

We were challenged several times in passing the batteries, and were informed that the port regulations did not admit our quitting the shore after dusk.

When on board, Giaffer intreated us to give him either more money or more liquor ; but we refused, as he had already had plenty of both. Finding us persist in our denials, he threw himself on his face, and

repeatedly kissed the deck, to enforce his petition.

February 7.—We sailed this morning at break of day, with the wind as favourable as it could blow. Our numbers were increased by Lieutenant Taylor of the Madras cavalry, and his lady, and Mr. Harrison of the Bombay Marine. They had come from Bombay to Muscat in the Liverpool, and had been waiting for an opportunity to proceed up the Gulph, when Captain Alexander, with his usual kindness, granted them a passage. Lieutenant and Mrs. Taylor were going on a visit to their brother Captain Taylor, our political agent at Bussorah. Mr. Harrison was proceeding to join one of the Company's cruisers.

February 8, 9.—We passed Cape Jask on the 8th ; and, on the evening of the 9th, arrived off the Quoins. These are five small rocky islands. Ships generally prefer going outside; but the wind was too scant to enable us to do so.

The wind continued favourable, and the weather delightful. The kindness and good humour of the officers and every one on board, made the voyage quite a party of pleasure. We had a beautiful view of Cape Musendom, of the islands of the Tombs, and of Pulior, in succession: this last, the Pulior of the Greeks, we passed within a mile. They are all rocky, and elevated three or four hundred feet. From the distance at which we were, they had a volcanic appearance; which is, I believe, their character.

February 10, 11.—We passed Cape Nabon on the 10th, and Cape Verdistan on the 11th.

February 12.—The S. E. wind, which had blown gently hitherto, now increased to a strong breeze. The next morning we arrived at Bushire, (or more properly, Abooshehr.) At this place travellers disembark, who intend taking the direct route through

Persia. It was Captain Alexander's intention to have touched here, but the wind not serving to enter the harbour, and being favourable for pursuing our voyage, we took advantage of the opportunity of meeting the Honourable Company's cruiser *Discovery*; and sent letters and parcels by her to Bushire. After which, we proceeded on our voyage, and reached Karrack at three in the afternoon. The *Discovery* was engaged on a survey of the Arabian shore. Her officers informed us that they had discovered a large inlet, into which they proceeded to lat. 21. in the meridian of Muscat.

Karrack, the Icarus of Arrian, is a small rocky island, famous for its pearl fishery. It was formerly in possession of the Dutch, when the population amounted to three thousand; but it has now not more than three hundred inhabitants. They manufacture a coarse kind of cloth; and subsist upon the produce of their gardens, and fishing-nets.

The ruins of warehouses, and a church, bespeak the former grandeur of the place.

Ships bound to Bussorah engage a pilot here. We sent on shore for one, who came off, accompanied by a sick townsman, whom he brought for medical advice.

The ship had been lying to for a couple of hours for the pilot, and was only waiting for his directions to make sail. The sun was just setting, as he came upon deck; he, however, took no notice of our impatience to proceed, but went aft, and, spreading his mat, was soon so engaged in prayer, as to be seemingly unconscious of all external objects.

The case of the sick man, who accompanied the pilot, is rather singular. About ten months ago, in digging for the foundation of a house, he found a quantity of ancient gold coins. The discovery soon came to the knowledge of the Sheikh, or Governor of Bushire, who immediately caused the whole treasure to be transferred to his own coffer. The

Sheikh's officers, long after all had been given up, so alarmed the poor finder of the gold, by going to him daily, and saying they were come to lead him to instant execution, that they drove him to a state of derangement, under which he was labouring when we saw him. The apprehensions of losing his life, had so worked upon his imagination, that he continually fancied he heard voices, bidding him prepare for instant death.

In making sail, the mainyard gave way. During the consequent delay, our favourable wind forsook us. Being now within the influence of the tide, we were obliged, when it changed against us, to anchor on the Persian shore, off Cape Baungk, the Bang of the charts.

The South-East wind, called Shurgee, had blown unusually long for the season. The North-West, or Shumaul, being the regular wind at this period.

We continued close along the Persian

shore, beating to the West, while favoured by the tide, and anchoring when it changed.

The mode adopted by our pilot for ascertaining the proper channel, was by the state of the soundings. If hard, he would decide that we had reached the bank of the channel, and would put the ship about, till a similar indication proved we were on the other side, when he would order the ship on the opposite tack. His whole stock of English consisted in two inquiries; one relative to the ship's course, and the other, to her soundings. The repeated queries of, "How is her head? Hard or soft?" produced a combination of words that afforded much merriment to the sailors.

February 16.—In this manner, we continued to grope our way for the channel, till, on the morning of the 16th, I was standing at the gangway repeating, in Persian, to the pilot, the soundings as given by the man in the chains, when some one forward cried

out, "Shoal a-head." I immediately informed the pilot of this; but as he would not alter the ship's course, in one moment we found ourselves aground. Every effort was made for relief. Our water was started, and a small anchor laid out, by which means, in two hours, she was hauled off, and very fortunately, without sustaining any damage. We anchored soon after, in three fathoms water at high tide; and as the tide fell nine feet, the ship lay aground for some time; but the bottom being soft she was quite safe.

While this was going on, the author of our calamity was pacing the deck, the picture of terror and indecision, calling aloud on Mahomet to assist us out of the danger. His fears were not much lessened by the threats thrown out by each passing tar. "I say, Jack," said one of them, "we'll string you up for this;" making his observation intelligible, by pointing with one hand to

the yard-arm, and with the other, to the neck of his auditor, at the same time imitating the convulsive guggle of strangulation. When called to account for his obstinacy, the pilot gave us an answer in the true spirit of predestination : “ If it is God’s pleasure that the ship should go ashore, what business is it of mine ? ”

The place where we ran aground, was one of the banks, at the mouth of the united streams of Euphrates and Tigris, called Shut ul Arab, or Boundary of Arabia. Seven channels form the approach to the river, but only one is navigable for large ships. On the morning of the 17th we came in sight of the once famed land of Mesopotamia, than which nothing can be more uninteresting in appearance. The country is so dead a flat, that the numerous pelicans, which darken the sands, at the mouth of the river, are the first indications we obtained, of our approach to shore. Shortly after, when

the land was on both sides of us, the classical Euphrates was to be seen lazily pursuing its course between low banks of mud and rushes. In proceeding up the river the scene changed, offering a nearly uninterrupted succession of date-trees till we reached Bussorah.

A short time before we anchored, we passed the ship *Sultan*, and sent letters by her to our Indian friends. The *Sultan* had on board a cargo of horses, from Bussorah, for the Calcutta market. Ships trading between the Indian Presidencies and the Gulph, find horses a profitable speculation.

February 18.—In working up the river this afternoon, we were visited by the Sheikh, or chieftain, of the adjacent country, who brought a present of fish for the Captain. He was a tall commanding-looking man, wore a dagger in his girdle, and was dressed in loose flowing robes of light green silk.

Shortly after he came on board a few minutes, he addressed himself to me, as the interpreter, and said, in a whisper, that he should like to pledge the officers in a glass of brandy and water ; but, being a Mahometan, he felt a difficulty in drinking before the Prince. On this hint, he was invited into the gun-room, and a brandy bottle being placed before him, he made such copious libations, that he completely overcame his Mahometan notions of modesty, and when summoned to dinner, seated himself next the Prince, and so terrified him with his drunken embraces, that His Highness begged I would sit between them. By this unenviable honour, I came in for the greater share of his kindness. It was not, however, confined to me. Seizing the dishes within his grasp, he severed, with his brawny fingers, the several meats contained in them, and threw a piece to every person at table. Then turning to the Prince, and flourishing his greasy arm, bared to the el-

BEHAVIOUR OF AN ARAB SHEIKH.

bow, he abused His Highness for not pledging him, in no very measured terms.

If the Arab showed too much national dislike to the Persian, he was rather too cordial towards us, calling us brothers, and expressing his regard by gestures, as well as by words. His attentions were beginning to be rather annoying, when he was luckily obliged to make a speedy retreat from the table.

The scene, though distressing on account of the agony which the effeminate Persian endured, under the muscular grasp of this Arab barbarian, was nevertheless amusing,—the timid uneasiness of the one, being ludicrously contrasted with the satyr-like drunkenness of the other.

CHAPTER III.

The Sheikh's modest demeanour.—His Residence.—Repast.—Spirited Reply of the Sheikh's Son—Captain Taylor.—Land at Bussorah.—New Governor.—Ex-Governor.—The New Governor's Public Entrance into Bussorah.—First act of his Government.—His Visits to the Political Agent.—His Visit returned.—Wearing Shoes in the Chamber of an Asiatic.—Horse-racing in the Desert.—The Governor's attempt at Oppression.—An Armenian's Betrothment.—Pas de deux between a Jew and a Turk.

February 19.—It was entertaining to observe the timid and downcast look, which the Sheikh put on his countenance this morning, differing so widely from the habi-

tual ferocity of his aspect. To cheer up his spirits, and to make his mind easy, Mr. Hamilton and myself accepted his invitation to go to his house. Once out of the ship, he soon regained his spirits, and proved to be a very agreeable companion.

The Sheikh told us, that within a few miles of Mohumrah, there was a stone with an inscription in European characters. This may possibly be an ancient record, and worthy the notice of some future traveller. From the direction in which he pointed, it must be nearly south of Mohumrah.

The Sheikh's residence is in a quadrangular mud fort ; the walls of which, in many places, have been battered down by the rain.

The mansion, like the fort, is built entirely of mud ; round it are the huts of the Sheikh's retainers. The interior of the dwelling is entirely destitute of ornament.

A carpet was spread for us on the dusty floor, round which we seated ourselves very comfortably, to some excellent fish, fruits, and sweetmeats; and with this good cheer forgot the unfurnished state of the apartment, and the absence of knives and forks.

We were much amused with the Sheikh's son, a child three years old, whose spirited answers were strong indications of the manner in which his father was bringing him up. I asked him, among other questions, if he was an Arab or a Persian. Indignant that there should be a doubt upon the subject, his little hand grasped the dagger in his girdle, as he replied in an angry tone, "God be praised, I am an Arab!" an example how early a mutual hatred is instilled into the youth of these rival nations.

February 20.—We anchored within ten miles of Bussorah. Captain Taylor, the political agent, came on board, was received

with the customary salute, and after dinner returned ashore.

The next morning, the ship anchored opposite the town. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, and our travelling party disembarked, and landed at the British factory, the residence of the political agent. With the exception of the palace, this is the best house in town. It is situate a mile up a narrow creek, which discharges itself into the Shut ul Arab.

A few days before our arrival, the brother of the Pacha of Bagdad, himself a Pacha of two tails, had been appointed governor of Bussorah. He was encamped in the Desert, outside the walls, and was shortly to make his public entrance into the town.

The late governor, having a short time before received secret intelligence that his successor was appointed, one night mounted his horse, and traversed the Desert to Bagdad. He thought it expedient not to wait to

deliver up his authority formally ; because it is the usual custom of a new governor to seize upon the person of his predecessor, and to extract from him what money he can. By this means, the ex-governor has generally to refund some of his ill-gotten wealth here, and on arriving at Bagdad, to answer the additional demands made upon him by the Pasha of that city, whose delegate he is. In the present instance, he has only to satisfy the rapacity of the one, instead of both the brothers. He will then fall back into his original situation of janizary, with which he must be content, till his stars guide him to another government, or a bow-string.

February 22.—The Pasha made his public entrance this morning. We saw the whole procession from the windows of a Persian's house. They came in the following order:—

At nine o'clock, a body of armed men, forming an advance guard, announced their approach by a continual discharge of mus-

quetry, and passed us at a jog trot; then another party, who occasionally halted, and danced in a circle; marking time by striking their swords against each others' shields. These were followed by large parties of Desert Arabs, of the Zobeir tribe, preceded by their immediate petty chiefs, on horseback. Each of them had carried before him, a large flag, red, green, and red. The Zobeir Arabs are mercenary troops, and acknowledge a kind of subjection to the Governor: they are small, mean-looking men, with an Indian cast of features. They carried either fire-arms, or swords and shields. Some had their robes bound at the waist with a girdle; others wore only a loose shirt. Several had on the handkerchief turban, peculiar to the Arabs; and a few were bareheaded, having their hair twisted into several long plaits. This appears to have been the ancient custom of the people of the Persian Gulph. Diodorus Siculus describes the inhabitants

of Gidrosia,* as keeping their hair thick and matted, το τριχῶμα πεπιλωμένον εῶσι.

After these came the *toofungees*, personal troops of the Governor, distinguishable by fur caps, nearly a yard in diameter; then the Pasha's led horses richly caparisoned. Behind them, a troop of mounted Tchousses, (messengers,) beating small drums placed at the saddle-bow. These were followed by the native officers of the English factory, mounted on horses "trimly decked." Then the Captain Pasha, (the Admiral,) who, with a watch in his hand, was timing the auspicious moment, as laid down by the astrologers, for the Pasha's entrance into his palace. This was decided to be twenty minutes past three, Turkish time; or twenty minutes past nine, according to European computation. Next

* Gedrosia is now the province of Mekran. Alexander the Great passed through it, on his return from India. It was the country of the Ichthiophagi, and the present name, Mekran, has the same signification.

came the Cadi and Mufti, whose offices are so often mentioned in the *Arabian Nights*; and then the Pasha, with his hand on his breast, returning the salutations of the populace. At the moment of his appearing, a group of women, covered from head to foot, set up a loud and shrill cry. A troop of mounted Janizaries brought up the rear, having with them a band, the music of whose instruments resembled that of so many penny trumpets.

During this procession, muskets were incessantly fired off; the report of which, combined with the squeaking of the music, the noise of the tamtams, the squalling of the women, and the rude singing of the soldiery, formed a din of discord more easily conceived than described.

Salutes from His Majesty's ship *Alligator*, and all the ships at anchor, announced the reading of the firman, or order, appointing the Pasha *Mooselim* Governor; and the first

act of his government was to publish an edict, graciously informing the loyal citizens of Bussorah, that any one of them, found in the bazaar after nine in the evening, would certainly be hanged.

February 24.—After some diplomatic discussion, the Pasha consented to pay the political agent the first visit, provided the compliment was immediately returned. He came this morning, attended by the same retinue which accompanied him on his arrival into town. The interview was uninteresting; the Pasha being a man of mean abilities, and excelling in nothing, but that at which most despots are proficient—extortion.

February 26.—This morning, Captain Taylor returned the Pasha's visit. He was preceded by his Dragomans, Tchousses, and Janizaries, bearing banners; and accompanied by Captain Alexander, the officers of the Alligator, and our travelling party. Follow-

ing us, were numerous Christians, Jews, and Mahometans, enjoying British protection. Our procession, though not quite so numerous as that of the Pasha, was more regular and orderly ; and our pageant was considerably swelled by the addition of the Alligator's marines, whose steady march formed a strong contrast with the savage dance of the wild Arab soldiery we had seen a few days before. When we arrived at the Serai, (palace,) we dismounted from our horses, and ascended the stairs. We were no sooner in sight of the Pasha, than two of his officers, one on each side, put their arms under his shoulders, and carried him into the hall of audience, as if he had been suddenly deprived of the use of his legs ; a similar form was observed by the attendants of Captain Taylor. In this manner, both, according to established etiquette, entered the apartment together : for, as in Turkey the inferior rises to receive the superior,

and as both here considered themselves equal : the one rising for the other, would have been a concession that neither would have made.

The ceremony of carrying the great man into the Divan is an ancient custom, and is mentioned in the Arabian Nights. Abon Hassan, (the Sleeper awakened), when acting the Caliph, was lifted up the steps of the throne by Mesrour the Chief of the Eunuchs, and another officer, whose business it was to assist in this ceremony.

The floor of the room in which we were received, was covered with Persian carpets, and Turkish pillows were placed round the walls. The Pasha, and his European guests, occupied chairs. Servants came in and threw over each of us an embroidered scarf, by way of a napkin ; we were then presented with sweetmeats, coffee, Turkish and Persian pipes, and sherbet. The Pasha very civilly offered to give our travelling party letters to his brother, the Pasha of Bagdad ;

but this favour was declined for us by Captain Taylor, on the plea, that we felt assured of a kind reception. In half an hour, the attendants brought us rose-water, and some chafing dishes containing incense for perfuming the beard, a ceremony, which was performed by every downy cheeked midshipman of the *Alligator*.

During this visit, we wore our hats, in conformity to the Eastern custom of always keeping the head covered ; and agreeably to an exclusive privilege granted to Englishmen, we did not take off our shoes. Without entering into the merits of that John Bull policy, which exacts from the natives of the country in which we are residing a conformity to our customs, instead of our adopting theirs, the privilege we Englishmen claim, both at Bagdad and at this place, of keeping on our shoes in the presence of the Pasha, certainly does appear an useless acquisition of privilege on our parts, and one

that cannot but be highly offensive to their Asiatic feelings.

It is scarcely necessary to mention, that throughout the East, the mere act of a native entering a room with shoes on, is the greatest possible insult, as it is on the floor that all meals are eaten. Let us put the question to ourselves. Would any of us be pleased, if a foreigner were to claim the right of coming from the streets, in his dirty boots, and of dancing up and down our dinner-table?

March 1.—We went this afternoon into the Desert to a horse-race; an amusement, of which the natives of Bussorah are as fond as our own countrymen; though I fear, if an English jockey had been here, he would have thought the profession disgraced by the exhibition. For our own parts, we were more amused, than if the business had been conducted according to the strictest rules of the turf. The spot selected was the Great Desert,

which commences immediately outside the town ; a circular furrow of two miles marked the course ; and the stakes consisted of a small subscription raised from amongst our European party. The five candidates who started for the prize, were well suited to the general character of the scene. Instead of being decked in all the colours of the rainbow, a coarse loose shirt comprised all the clothing of the Arab jockey ; and the powerful bit of the country was the only article of equipment of the horse he bestrode. Thus simply accoutred, at a signal given, these half-naked savages set off at full speed, each giving a shout to animate his horse. They arrived like a team at the goal ; the prize was adjudged to an Ethiopian slave. The scene was highly animated and interesting, though we had neither splendid equipages, nor fair ladies to grace our sports ; but what we lost in splendour and beauty, we gained in novelty ; and though, when occasionally gazing

on some wearer of gaudy silks, the bright smile of woman did not repay our curiosity, we almost forgot the disappointment in beholding the animated countenance of a turbaned Turk, who, bearded to the eyes, would be seen scampering past us with jereed in hand, to challenge a comrade to the contest; and spurred on by his favourite amusement, would lay aside the gravity of the divan, in the all exhilarating air of the Desert.

Such an exhibition was amusingly set off by the performances of our shipmates. Every youngster of the Alligator had provided himself with a horse, and, as much at home here as if on Southampton Downs, was to be seen scampering across the Desert on Arabs, scarcely broke. One of these, zealous for the honour of his cloth, challenged me to ride a race with him: off we both set in gallant style, but in his anxiety to get to windward of "the soldier officer," he ran foul

of a comrade, whom he capsized, as well as himself, at the same moment; the palm was consequently adjudged to me, though my rival competitor swore "he should certainly have won, if the lubber had not come athwart his hawse!"

March 2.—The Pasha hearing of the feat of the successful horse of yesterday, sent for it this morning to his own stable; and it was only on the representation of Captain Taylor that he was induced to forego his claim.

March 3.—Mr. Taylor, the officers of the Alligator, and our travelling party, went this afternoon to the house of an Armenian, named Parsigh (the head dragoman to the British factory), for the purpose of being present at the ceremony of his betrothment to an Armenian lady, whom he had never seen, now resident at Bushire.

We were admitted into a long narrow apartment, fitted up in the Turkish style,

where we found, seated with their backs to the wall, fifty Armenian ladies, who rose on our approach. At the top of the room was the *nishaun*, or betrothing present, consisting of a bottle of rose-water, sugar-candy, and oranges covered with gold-leaf; over the *nishaun* were thrown two or three embroidered scarfs. The Armenian bishop, accompanied by two priests, now entered the room, carrying wax-candles, ornamented with gold-leaf. Their dress was simple and uniform, being merely loose black robes, clasped in front with a small silver crucifix. Their heads were shaved, with the exception of the crown, thus completely reversing the mode of tonsure practised by the Roman Catholic clergy. An officiating priest brought in a glass of wine, over which the bishop waved the crucifix, and dropped in a diamond ring. Chapters from the Old and New Testament were then chanted by the bishop and priests.

This ceremony of betrothing only takes

place when the parties are at a distance from each other. In this instance, the *nishann* and ring are to be forwarded to the betrothed at Bashin. When the ceremony was over, we retired to another room to dine. Among a great variety of dishes, I recognized many of those mentioned in the Arabian Nights in the imaginary feast of Hindbad the Porter, with the merry Barmecide Lord.

After dinner one of our party proposed the health of the bride elect, which was drank with "three times three," to the astonishment of our host, who did not know what to make of our noisy civilities ; but as we were rulers of the feast we had it all our own way, and amused ourselves with joking the future bridegroom on the fertile subject of matrimony. In this, we were joined by his relations, while the subject of our merriment sate blushing and smiling with all becoming modesty. In the course of the evening, one of the relations sang a song,

with a loud nasal twang, to our national air of "God Save the King?"

In the midst of this revelry, attracted by the sounds of music, we stole on to a terrace where we found all the ladies assembled. They were dancing in a circle with a slow measured step, with their little fingers linked together. This dance is the Romaic, which I have myself frequently danced in the Ionian Islands, and which is accurately described by Lord Byron:—

" A groupe of Grecian girls,
The first and tallest her white kerchief waving,
Were strung together like a row of pearls,
Linked hand in hand and dancing."

Two very pretty girls, with their hair neatly plaited down their backs, then danced a *pas de deux*. The step, though slow, was not deficient in grace. The females that we saw were handsome. Their hair, from the straggling specimens which escaped from out the handkerchief, appeared to be generally of

a beautiful auburn. Of their figures no correct opinion could be formed, from the disadvantageous shape of a dress consisting of loose quilted robes, open in the front so as to leave the chest quite exposed, and a large scarf tied negligently about the hips.

As the evening advanced, we Europeans took share in the performances in a merry reel, to the music of the drum and fife of the marines. After this, we witnessed the curious ceremony of a Turk and a Jew dancing together to celebrate the betrothment of a Christian—a circumstance remarkable in a country so distinguished for religious rancour to those of a different persuasion. The exhibition was truly pantomimic and highly entertaining, as it served to contrast the bustling activity of the European with the steady demeanour of the Asiatic. The dance was meant to represent a fight for a fair lady. It commenced with divers gliding movements, and at last ended in an

open-handed sparring match, in which both turbans were discomposed : not so the gravity of the wearers, who during the dance, which lasted upwards of a quarter of an hour, moved not a muscle of their features. At a late hour we retired to rest, attended by a numerous host of servants carrying linen lanterns, which, reflecting on the mingled group of Europeans and Asiatics, had a very picturesque appearance ; so, not having, like the inhabitants, the fear of a halter before our eyes for keeping late hours, we placed the drummer and fifer in the van, and returned to the Factory singing and dancing all the way, our sounds of merriment breaking in upon the dead silence of the streets.

CHAPTER IV.

Ancient Ruins—Tombs of Ali, the Barmecide, and of Zobeir, an Arab Chief—Town of Zobeir—Sheikh of Dirhemmia—City of Bussorah—Filth of the Streets—Old and New Bazaars—Coffee-houses—Trade—Population—Productions—Preparations for departure—Guard of Arabs—Aboo Nasir—Entertainment on board the Alligator.

March 5.—Mr. Hamilton, two officers of the Alligator, and myself, went to Zobeir, a town eight miles distant, to examine some ruins in the neighbourhood, supposed, by some, to be those of the ancient city of Bussorah. Within two miles of Zobeir, the remains of a wall can be traced; and here commence the ruins, which are very extensive.

Large fragments of stone pillars lie scattered in every direction; many of these remaining in the original position, show that the former buildings were spacious, and supported by colonnades. About a mile west of Zobeir, the remains of buildings are much more indicative of former splendour, than elsewhere. Our guides informed us, that this quarter was formerly inhabited by the wealthy Barmecides, of whom mention is made in the Arabian Nights. This noble family was of Persian extraction, but settling afterwards in the cities of Bagdad and Busorah, its members enjoyed, under several successive Caliphs, the highest honours of the state. The portion of a handsome arch, containing a Cufic inscription, was pointed out to us, as the Jamee Ali Barmekee, the tomb of Ali the Barmecide. This personage was the uncle of our old acquaintance, the Vizier Giaffer, of Arabian Nights' celebrity. Half a mile to the west of this tomb, is a small mosque, covered with glazed tiles, containing

the tomb of Zobeir, an Arab chief, from whom the neighbouring town derives its name. This chieftain was one of the earliest followers of Mahomet, and was slain at the battle of the Camel,* which was fought near this place; an action memorable in the Mahometan annals, as the first in which the arms of the "faithful" were stained with civil blood.

It would be difficult to assign a correct date to these ruins. D'Anville supposes them to belong to the city of the Orchæni, a sect of Chaldean astronomers and mathematicians. Niebuhr, and other travellers, say they are those of ancient Bussorah; but then the time in which that city was founded, has never been correctly defined. By some, we are assured that Bussorah owed its existence to Omar, in the 14th year of the Hegira, and 635th of the Christian era; and by others it is attributed to the Roman Emperor

* A. D. 655.

Trajan, who reigned five hundred years previous to the former date.

We were met within a mile of Zobeir by Hajee Yusuf, one of the principal inhabitants, who, with two or three horsemen, paid us the compliment of preceding us into the town. On arriving at the Hajee's house, we alighted from our horses, and partook of a plentiful Arab breakfast.

Zobeir has regular streets, and an air of cleanliness that must strike every one coming from the stinking city of Bussorah. It was built a century ago, by some Arabs, who fortified themselves in it, against the attacks of that desperate gang of Mahometan dissenters—the Wahhabbees, so called from their leader Abdool Wahheb.

After breakfast, we received a visit from the Sheikh, or Chief of Dirhemmia, who begged us to pay him a visit. His residence was of the general appearance of an Arab chieftain's. It was inclosed within a mud

fort, and considering its situation in a sandy desert, certainly did great credit to the projector. The name Dirhemmia is derived from Dirhem, a small coin, signifying the expense the building occasioned. In taking us round the premises, it was easy to see that our host expected unqualified approbation of every thing he showed us. That upon which he seemed most to pride himself, were his large reservoirs of water, a characteristic of the value the desert Arab attaches to this first necessary of life. He next took us round the fortifications, which, as he seemed to appeal to us for an opinion, we pronounced to be tajoob, (wonderful;) though we would scarcely have trusted our backs against the battlements.

The city of Bussorah is enclosed within a wall, eight miles in circumference. Of this space, the greatest portion is laid out in gardens and plantations of date trees. It is traversed throughout by numerous canals, sup-

plied by the Euphrates, into which they empty themselves at every turn of tide. The abundance of water, besides irrigating the gardens, which it does effectually, might also be the means of keeping the town clean, were there not in the inhabitants an innate love of filth. Bussorah is the dirtiest town even in the Turkish dominions. The streets, which are narrow and irregular, are almost insupportable from the stench. Some houses are built of kiln-burnt bricks, but the greater number are of mud. From these, project several long sprouts made of the body of the date tree, which convey filth of every description into the streets, so that a passenger is in frequent danger of an Edinburgh salutation, without the friendly caution of *Gardez loo*.

The old bazaar is extremely mean. Rafters are laid across the top, and covered with ragged mats, which prove but a poor protection against the heat of the sun. Through-

out the bazaar we observed numerous coffee-houses; they are spacious, unfurnished apartments, with benches of masonry built round the walls, and raised about three feet from the ground. On these are placed mats; at the bar are ranged numerous coffee-pots, and pipes of different descriptions. It is customary for every smoker to bring his own tobacco. These houses were principally filled by Janizaries, who were puffing clouds from their pipes in true Turkish taciturnity.

The principal trade is with our Indian possessions, which, with the exception of a few English ships, is confined to Arabian vessels. The return for the articles with which we furnish them, are pearls, horses, copper, dates, and raw silk. The population is estimated at sixty thousand, principally Arabs, Turks and Armenians; but I have no doubt, that on a close inquiry, there would be found natives of every country in Asia. Dates are the principal production here;

there are, besides, quantities of rice, wheat, barley, and abundance of fruits and vegetables.

March 6.—The ordinary mode of proceeding to Bagdad by water, is to secure a passage on board one of a fleet of boats, which start at this season of the year, whenever their numbers are sufficient to enable them to resist the attacks of the lawless tribes of wandering Arabs, which infest the banks of the river. On our arrival at Bus-sorah, several of these vessels had taken in their cargo, and were only waiting for others to join them, to proceed on their voyage. We had originally intended to have availed ourselves of this opportunity; but our patience being quite exhausted by their departure being protracted from day to day, we adopted the more expeditious mode of procuring a boat for our entire use, and proceeding alone. This was a description of vessel called a *Bughalow*. It was sixty feet

long, fourteen wide at the broadest part, and much peaked at the fore; the cabin was ten feet square, and four high. There was one mast, with a lateen sail, which was used for crossing the river; for the wind blowing mostly from the northward, we could seldom use it for sailing. As the voyage was principally performed by tracking, to ensure expedition we engaged a double set of boatmen, whose business it was to track, or tow the boat, as horses do in canals in England. Our agreement was, that they should proceed night and day; and, as a defence against the attacks of the wandering banditti, we engaged a guard of twenty of the Zobeir Arabs. Besides the captain of the boat, and the commander of the guard, we had a superintendent of the whole establishment, by name Aboo Nasir, a good-natured, drunken vagabond, whose gratitude for a life, thrice spared by British influence from the sentence of three successive Pashas, we

deemed a sufficient guarantee for his fidelity to us, and in no instance did we find our confidence misplaced. This man was a stout, tall, elderly Arab, on whose face, the sun and strong liquor seemed to have been contending for many a year which could give it the strongest tinge of scarlet, for Aboo Nasir was one who had long "forsworn thin potations."

The expense of our whole establishment, including fees to the different powerful sheikhs, through whose countries we were to pass, amounted to sixteen hundred and ninety piastres.

When there was sufficient water in the canal, our boat was moored alongside of the British factory, where we embarked our baggage, and a fortnight's stock of provisions and necessaries, consisting of tea, coffee, sugar, spices, dates, biscuits, rice, tobacco, and a plentiful supply of spirits. We had had some

difficulty in procuring servants, but at last succeeded in engaging three : an Indian Sy-yud, who had officiated while on board the Alligator, as cook to Futteh Ali Khan, continued with us in the same capacity ; the other two were, a Persian, who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and a half-starved Ethiopian. At three o'clock, the gates of the British factory were opened, and first discovered to us our guard of Arabs ; who, armed with swords, shields, and muskets, scrambled on board, singing and dancing to the rude music of the fife and tamtam,—presenting as wild an appearance as any of those savages against whom they were engaged to protect us.

It had been our intention to have started the same evening, but we remained till the following night, to bid farewell to our kind friend Captain Alexander, who was to give an entertainment to Captain Taylor and some Armenian ladies. After seeing our boat

safely moored at the mouth of the creek, we went on board the Alligator, and dined with the gun-room officers.

March 7.—The quarter-deck of the Alligator was tastefully fitted up with flags for the reception of the guests, who came on board at five in the afternoon. Captain Alexander, thinking it would gratify the curiosity of the Armenian ladies, showed them every part of the ship, which was in most admirable order; but we could not discover whether they were pleased or otherwise, for they went through the business like victims, and looked at every thing that was shown them, with the most immoveable gravity. I handed to dinner a pretty looking girl, from whom I tried in vain to extract an answer to any of my questions. Amongst the party was a handsome girl, a native of Ispahan; whence her parents had fled with her a few months back. They had come to Bussorah for British protection, to save her from being immured in

a Mussulman harem. From living among Mussulmen, the Armenians have in many respects adopted their customs, and amongst others, that of the seclusion of women in their own families, though they allow them to go abroad. The party who visited the Alligator, consisted entirely of females, unaccompanied by any male relation, and we were informed that the two sexes are never seen together in public.

CHAPTER V.

We take leave of our Shipmates—And proceed on our Voyage—Our Boatmen and Guard—Abstinence from Wine—Koorna—The River Tigris—Il Jezeerah, the reputed site of Paradise—Appearance of the Country—Our first interview with the Desert Arabs—Arab Village—Conduct of our Guard—Goomru—Tribute—Extortion—Tomb of the Prophet Ezra—Abundance of Game—Kill a brace of Partridges in the Garden of Eden—Curious Scene—Behaviour and Appearance of the Female Arabs of the Desert.

AT ten o'clock we left the ship, and went on board our boat, after taking an affectionate leave of our shipmates ; to many of whom, I grieve to say, we bade an eternal adieu. Since my arrival in England, I have received the afflicting intelligence that our excellent host, Captain Alexander, and five of his offi-

cers, have fallen victims to the Indian climate.

March 8.—We were nearly starved with cold last night, our cabin was shut in on two sides by mats only, which were imperfectly closed up, and a strong north-west wind blowing, we could not keep ourselves warm with all the bed-clothes we could procure. We halted three hours during the night, and proceeded again at day-break. Flocks of cattle and sheep were every where grazing on the banks, and we saw some very fine horses loose, but all having clothing.

The natives of no two countries could form a stronger contrast to each other in appearance, than our Arab guard and our Arab boatmen, the former (with the exception of two tall negroes) were small thin young men, about five feet five inches in height, with sallow complexions and Indian features; while the latter were as hardy and muscular-looking fellows as I ever saw. A loose brown shirt,

of the coarseness of sackcloth, was the only covering of the latter. This, whenever labour required it, was thrown aside, and discovered forms most admirably adapted to their laborious avocations; indeed, any of the boatmen would have made an excellent model for a Hercules; and one in particular, with uncombed hair and shaggy beard, struck us all with the remarkable resemblance he bore to the statues of that deity.

In the evening we sate down cross-legged, to our first meal as fellow-travellers—a well greased pilau. Though amply provided with spirits, and all professing due allegiance to the bottle, we tried to content ourselves with water; an experiment which we found to answer so well that, while actually on the road, we entirely abstained from drinking any thing else. To this circumstance we alone attribute our health during our long and fatiguing journey, and we earnestly recommend the substitution of the pure

element for fermented liquors to the serious consideration of all, but more particularly to Oriental travellers. It is, however, to be understood, that whenever the traveller halts for a few days, he will, as we always did, make up for the abstinence during the march.

March 9.—We passed this morning a Turkish three-decker at anchor, commanded by the Captain Pacha. It was a rotten hulk, seventy years old, with seven men on board, though the Government was charged with the expense of the full equipment.

At nine, we arrived off the town of Koorna, the ancient Apamea, a city built by Seleucus Nicator, in honour of his wife Apamea. Koorna is situate at the extremity of a narrow slip of land, formed by the confluence of the Euphrates and Tigris. We saw here several boats, waiting to be joined by others from Bussorah, as the navigation beyond is unsafe for single boats,

owing to the lawless tribes that infest the banks. We did not land at the town, as we wished, because our Arabs were at enmity with those on shore; we therefore kept the opposite bank, and our guards, with a view perhaps, to demonstrate their force, assembled at the head of the boat, struck up their music, and forming themselves into a circle, began singing, dancing, and striking each others shields with their drawn swords. Boats, in general, pay duty here, but we passed unmolested.

Leaving the Euphrates to the west, we proceeded up the Tigris, where we soon found ourselves in a current running between six and seven knots an hour, which fully proved to us the appropriate name of Teer (arrow), which the ancient Persians gave to this river on account of the rapidity of its course.

Two miles above Koorna, the plantations of date trees, which had hitherto covered the banks, ceased, and the country on both sides

was overflowed. We landed in the afternoon on the west bank to shoot, and walked several miles ; the ground was very wet, and the state of the vegetation indicated little fertility. This destitute place, which is called Il Jezeerah (The Island), is generally held to be the seat of Paradise. If such be the case, it certainly is not what the garden of our first parents is described to have been. Only a few shrubs have been visible since we left the vicinity of Koorna. The whole country is a dead flat ; and so much flooded in many parts, that we could hardly pass through it. The few dry patches of soil were covered with salt.

If the present barren appearance of this spot be the only reason for rejecting it as the site of Paradise, the same objection would apply to the surrounding district, which, though now a sandy desert, has been celebrated for the richness of its soil. Pliny calls it the most fertile of the East, (*solum Orientis ferti-*

lissimum), and who does not remember the vivid descriptions, in the Arabian Nights, of the delightful gardens of Bagdad and Balsora ?

Half an hour before sunset we arrived at a village of wandering Arabs. One of the men, a wild-looking savage, on seeing us approach, ran forwards in a frantic manner, and throwing down his turban at our feet, fiercely demanded Buxis (a present). He was made to replace his turban, but continued screaming as if distracted. This fellow's noise, and our appearance, soon collected a crowd of men, women, and children ; the greater number had evidently never seen an European before. The men advanced close to us with aspects far from friendly. The commander of our guard expressed a wish that we should not enter the village ; but so ardent was our curiosity in this our first interview with the Arabs of the Desert, that we disregarded his advice. Seeing us

resolved, he let us have our own way ; but would not allow any of the people to approach, being doubtful of their intentions towards us.

The village was a collection of about fifty mat huts, with pent roofs, from thirty to sixty feet long. The frame of the huts somewhat resembled the ribs of a ship inverted. It was formed of bundles of reeds tied together ; the mat covering was of the leaves of the date tree. An old Mussulman tomb stands on a mound at the south end of the village, and is the only building in which any other material than reed and date-leaves have been employed.

When we reached the banks of the river, we had to wait for our boat, which was tracking round a headland, and was still at some distance from us : so we stood with our backs to the water to prevent any attack from the rear. In the mean time, crowds of the inhabitants continued to press forward. As

their numbers were greatly superior to ours, and their demeanour rather equivocal, we tried by our manners to show as little distrust of them as possible ; not so, our guards, who, from being of the same profession as these marauders, treated them with less ceremony, and stood by us the whole time with their guns loaded and cocked, their fingers on the triggers, and the muzzles presented towards the crowd. Some of the Arabs occasionally came forward to look at our firearms, particularly our double-barrelled guns, but whenever they attempted to touch them, were always repulsed by our guard, who kept them at a distance. In the midst of this curious interview, the sheikh, or chief of the village, a venerable-looking old man with a long white beard, came, accompanied by two others, and brought us a present of a sheep ; for which, according to custom, we gave double its value in money. The sheikh's arrival, and our pecuniary acknowledgment

of his present, seemed to be an earnest of amity, as the crowd, by his directions, retired to a small distance, and formed themselves into a semicircle—himself and his two friends sitting about four yards in front.

The scene to us was of the most lively interest. Around us, as far as the eye could reach, was a trackless desert ; to our left was the rude village of the wanderers, and immediately in the foreground were their primitive inhabitants, unchanged, probably, in dress, customs, or language, since the time of the “ wild man” Ishmael, their ancestor. There was little variety in the dress of the men—a large brown shirt with open sleeves, extending to the knee, and bound round the loins with a leathern girdle, formed their principal, and sometimes only habiliment ; a few wore the handkerchief or turban. They were armed either with long spears or massive clubs. The dress of the females was also a loose shirt, but not being bound at the

waist, it left the person considerably exposed. Some of the women had rings in their noses, others wore necklaces of silver coins, and the hair of several of the girls was divided into long plaits, and completely studded with coins : they were all more or less tattooed on the face, hands, and feet, and some were marked on the ancles with punctures resembling the clock of a stocking.

This village is called Goomruk, and its inhabitants are notorious robbers ; they are subject to the sheikh of Montefeikh. It is customary to exact a stipulated tribute from every boat that passes ; this, after some conversation, we paid, and (our people not wishing to stay) we proceeded on our voyage, having much better luck than a boat we left here, with horses for the Pasha of Basra, which, not being strong enough to resist the demand, was detained for an additional exaction. Five boats which had left Bussorah

a week before us, had proceeded that morning on their voyage to Bagdad.

We continued our voyage while moonlight lasted, and then anchored till daybreak. At nine in the evening we passed an Arab encampment, pitched so close to the bank that our track-rope damaged several of the tents. This occasioned an uproar from a crowd of men, women, children, and dogs. They all rushed out together to discover the cause of the disturbance. On our guard's calling out Abdillah, their chief's name, we were welcomed from the shore, as a friendly tribe, with an assurance that they would send off milk, butter, and whatever else their camp could furnish.

March 10.—We now came in sight of the Hamerine Mountains, to the north-east. At a little before daylight, we passed a building, called Il Azer, (Ezra), reported by tradition to be the tomb of that prophet. It is

surmounted by a large dome covered with glazed tiles of a turquoise colour. The tomb is held in high veneration both by Jews and Mahometans, and is said to contain great riches—the offerings of pilgrims, particularly those of the former persuasion.

We saw numerous encampments of the wandering tribes, many of whom brought us milk, butter, and dates, and appeared to be most kindly disposed towards ourselves and crew.

Three of our party went out shooting in the Desert, and had excellent sport. Hares, black partridges, and snipes, were in the greatest abundance. For my own share of the game, I claim a brace of partridges, not a little proud, that nearly the first birds which ever fell by my gun, should have been killed in the garden of Eden. Another of our party killed a hare, but the boatmen objected to our having it dressed on board, as it had not undergone the ceremony of

being made *hulaul*, (lawful). This is performed by repeating a prayer, and by cutting the throat of the animal, with the neck placed towards the tomb of Mahomet. Yet, according to the Jewish law, from which nearly all Mahometan prohibitions respecting food are taken, the hare is an unclean animal, "because he cheweth the cud, and divideth not the hoof."*

At two, P. M., we passed the residence of Sheikh Abdillah Bin Ali, an Arab chief. As we continued our shooting excursion over a desert tract, unmarked by human habitation, we approached a boy tending cattle, who, immediately on perceiving us, set up a loud cry, and ran with all his might to a small mound, so gradually elevated, as to be scarcely perceptible to us. In an instant, like the dragon's teeth which Cadmus

* For the circumstance of the hare chewing the cud, vide Levit. chap. xi., and also the account given by Cowper, of his three hares.

sowed, a large body of men, armed with spears, appeared on the brow of the hill, and seemed to have grown out from the till then unpeopled spot. The men set up a loud shout, in which they were joined by the women and children, who now made their appearance. All, with one accord, rushed impetuously towards us, demanding the nature of our intentions; they were no sooner assured of our pacific disposition, than their clamour ceased, and in two minutes we were on the most friendly terms.

A little after this, several women, accompanied by a host of children, brought milk, butter, and curds, for sale, and followed the boat for some time. One of the women, from whom we received a vessel of milk, was offered a quantity of dates in return, by our servants. Not being satisfied with them, she desired to have her milk again. A piastre was thrown to her, which after taking up and examining, she ran off to a consider-

able distance, dancing and shouting with joy. Another very handsome young woman, with a child in her arms, asked for some cloth to cover her infant's head; we gave her a silk handkerchief, which so delighted her, that she approached the boat, and, with her right hand raised to Heaven, invoked every blessing on us in return. The handkerchief appeared to excite great curiosity, for a crowd collected round her, and it was held up and examined in every direction, seemingly with much delight.

The behaviour of these females formed a striking contrast with the manners of the Indian women, and still more with those of the veiled dames of Bussorah. They came to our boat with the frankness of innocence, and there was a freedom in their manners, bordering perhaps on the masculine; nevertheless, their fine features, and well-turned limbs, presented a *tout ensemble* of beauty, not often surpassed, perhaps, even

in the brilliant assemblies of civilized life. True it is, their complexions were of a gipsey brown; but, even on this point, there may be some who see

“A Helen’s beauty in a brow of Egypt.”

The woman who was so grateful for the handkerchief, as she stood on the edge of the bank, her beautiful eyes beaming with gratitude, would have been a fine illustration of some of the striking passages in Scott’s forcible delineations of female character.

CHAPTER VI.

Aboo Nasir—Village Jester—Akushee—English Gentlemen attacked by the Arabs—Munjummil—Thuyh Il Swyah—Mohumud Abool Hassan—We are challenged from the shore by the Arabs—Our Boatmen's answer—Manner in which the Arabs lie in ambush for Travellers—Cheshef—Illyauts—Black Tents illustrated by Scripture—Mr. Hamilton and I shoot at a Lioness—Curious flight of birds—Barter—Gubur Jumdeer—Ali Shurgee—Animals like Bats—Filifileh and Sooroot, an ancient ruin—Encampment of Arab Banditti—Aboo Nasir's answer to their inquiries—Mudduk-il-Hujauje—Koote—Horses procurable from hence to Bagdad—Description of the village—Jubul Afeez, a ruin—Arab Greyhounds—A Dandy of the Desert—Mr. Hamilton proceeds by land to Bagdad—Boats laden with firewood for Bagdad—Ummuttumim, a large Canal—Grotesque description of Boat—Shifeleh—Extensive Ruins—Observations on the general appearance of Ruins in this country—The ruins of Mumliheh—Coins—Want of instruments for digging.

AT four, P. M. we passed an encampment similar to that we had seen the night before ;

here our European costume and white faces so much attracted the attention and curiosity of the inhabitants, that they accompanied us along the bank for upwards of a mile, singing and dancing all the way. Aboo Nasir, who was a friend of their chief, had just drank sufficient to put on that solemn aspect a tipsy man so often assumes. Seating himself in midships, with his pipe in one hand, and his silver baton of authority in the other, he returned the salutations of the mob with the most amusing gravity, while our band squeaked a tune, and our guard figured away in the sword-dance.

In every village that we passed there was a merry noisy fellow, who seemed by general consent to be the common spokesman and buffoon. At this place, in particular, the representative of the people appeared to be highly agreeable to his constituents, as every sentence that he uttered brought down from them a roar of laughter, which was immediately re-echoed by our boat's crew.

Eight, P.M. off Akushee. At this place, some time ago, a Mr. Low and another Englishman were taken by the Arab hordes, and obliged to pay a stipulated sum for their release ; but they had not proceeded far, when numbers came off in boats to attack them, for the purpose of extorting an additional sum. Incensed at this conduct, our countrymen fired on their treacherous opponents, and killed two of them, but knowing that their tribe, which occupied both banks, would soon be up in arms against them, and the current being too strong to contend with, they were obliged to return to Bus-sorah.

March 11.—At nine in the morning, we passed a station called Munjummil, from an Arab Sheikh of that name, which, from the time of Ishmael,* has been the general origin

* “ These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their *towns*, and by their *castles*.” Gen. chap. xxv. ver. 16.



of names borne by different places in these countries.

We have not met with any habitations that could be considered permanent, nor any formed of more substantial materials than mats and reeds. The liability to inundations, and the habits of these wanderers, would prevent them from erecting buildings which could not be moved.

We passed in succession on the right bank, the usual station of Thuyn Il Swyah, and Mohumud Abool Hassan, Arab chiefs of note.

We saw numerous encampments of Arabs on both sides, all of whom, as our boat approached, loudly demanded who we were. We always answered them by mentioning the name of Mohumud, a powerful sheikh of the Montefeeekh tribe, whose protection our boatmen claim. This question was repeated night and day, and men frequently started up in the jungle, where neither habitations nor



any appearance of population were observable.

We were given to understand, that a boat was in no danger of being attacked when any number of Arabs were collected on the banks, as there was then no premeditated intention of robbery, but when only one or two made their appearance, there was reason to suspect that the remainder of the gang were at no great distance; and we frequently observed that Aboo Nasir and the boatmen were always more on the alert on these occasions. Indeed, the circumstance of our boat having to make its way against a rapid and tortuous stream, through a treeless desert, gave to robbers, who might be disposed to molest us, a great facility of observation, as well as ample time to make every necessary preparation for attack. Jeremiah alludes to this mode of lying in ambush, in his denunciation against the wickedness of Judah, “ In the ways hast

thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness." *

At two, P. M. off Cheshe. Here we fell in, for the first time, with the Illyauts, another description of wandering Arabs. Instead of the mat huts we had before seen, they occupied black tents, probably of the same description as those of their earliest ancestors. We have a curious illustration of this in the Songs of Solomon, where his bride compares the blackness of her complexion to the tents of Kedar.†

We made frequent visits to these encampments, which were all extremely wretched. The tents were about six feet long and three high, and brought strongly to mind the

* Jer. chap. iii. verse 2.

† "I am *black* but comely, oh ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the *tents* of Kedar, the curtains of Solomon." — Solomon's Song, chap. i. verse 5.

Kedar was the second son of Ishmael (Gen. xxv.): his tribe, under the name of Cedræni, are mentioned by Pliny, as descendants of Kedar. The Cedræan Arabs form a part of the Saracens.

habitations of the English gypsies. A large stud of blood horses were grazing near the tents, which being well cased in body cloths, formed a curious contrast with the miserable appearance of the Illyauts themselves.

At four o'clock, we stopped at a patch of brushwood jungle, where nearly all the boatmen and guard went to cut wood for fuel. In the midst of this employment, one of the party disturbed a lion that was sleeping under a bush. He was greatly frightened, and speedily communicated his terror to his comrades, who hastened on board. The lion stole away, and the trackers who had to walk through the same jungle, continued their work without making any objection. Game of every description is abundant throughout, which reminds us that we are in the ancient kingdom of Nimrod, that "mighty hunter before the Lord." The spot we were now passing, was quite living with the immense quantities of animals of all descriptions. At

every step, our trackers put up pelicans, swans, geese, ducks, and snipes; numbers of hogs were seen galloping about in every direction; a lioness strolled towards our boat, and stood staring at us for two or three seconds; when within thirty yards, Mr. Hamilton and myself both fired at her, but as we were loaded with small shot, we did her no injury; the noise of our guns made her turn quietly round, and she went away as leisurely as she came.

We saw, this afternoon, a numerous flock of small birds, which presented the appearance of a large whirlwind, and literally darkened the air in their flight. Both Mr. Lamb and Mr. Hart had seen the same in India, and told me that they were birds of the ortolan species.

March 12.—We remained on board this morning by desire of Aboo Nasir, who told us that the Arabs here were very uncivilized, and likely to molest us.

In the afternoon, we arrived off a small village, where we took in some milk and butter, and gave in exchange a handful of dried dates, which these primitive inhabitants liked equally as well as money. We saw here some small trading boats laden with dates, which they barter with the inhabitants for ghee and coarse cloths, manufactured from the wool of their sheep. We passed a small mound, called Gubur Jumdeer, erected in memory of a sheikh of the Bence Lam tribe, who died there, but whose body was sent for interment to Mushed Ali, the holy land of the Shiah sect of Mahometans.

Ten, P. M.—On the left banks of the river, we passed a place marked by a large clump of trees, called Ali Shurgee, where the Mahometan prophet Ali is said to have left the print of his foot in his ascent to heaven. We saw here several animals, which might

have been birds, flitting about the trees, but which appeared to us like the large Bengal bats, called the flying foxes.*

March 14.—We visited the remains of an ancient building on the right bank of the Tigris, composed of a large square mound of sun-burnt bricks, sixty paces long, forty-eight wide, and about twenty feet high. This place the Arabs called Filifileh, from a lady of rank and beauty, who, they said, flourished in the reign of King Kisra: a causeway extended to the east, interrupted by the river, to a similar mound, called Sooroot, so named from a handsome young husbandman who lived on the opposite bank, and with whom Filifileh is said to have fallen desperately in love. The tradition is, that Sooroot, like Leander, was in the habit of swimming across the river to his lady love, who, grieving that any time should be lost in such an exploit, erected this causeway to facilitate his visits.

* The *Vestpertiglio ingens* of Linnæus.

The name of the monarch, Kisra,* which, as well as Khosro and Chosroes, are synonymous with Cyrus, is intended by the Arabs to designate Noosheervan, surnamed Adil (the Just), who is highly celebrated in Oriental history for his justice and piety. It was the boast of Mahomet that he was born in this monarch's reign; and so proud are the modern natives of his memory, that they assign to him all doubtful remains of antiquity.

March 14.—We went on shore to an encampment of Illyauts, whom we found employed in making the carpets for which they are so celebrated. The inhabitants here were remarkably civil and respectful, and brought us several bowls of milk: our swords and pistols were as usual the great objects of their curiosity. We gave some

* “Kisra or Cosra, Chosroes or Cyrus, an Emperor, the surname of several kings of Parthia like Ptolemy amongst the Egyptians, or Cæsar *with* the Romans.”—*Richardson's Dictionary*.

money to a woman, which one of our guard attempted to appropriate to himself, but being discovered, was obliged to refund. When we returned on board we made a complaint to Aboo Nasir, who ordered him to be flogged; the culprit, on hearing his sentence, rushed into the cabin, threw himself on his knees, and kissed the cuff of Mr. Lamb's coat, and was pardoned at our intercession.

At ten at night, we reached an encampment of renowned robbers, and immediately received a caution from Aboo Nasir to be on the alert. They appeared either to have just arrived, or to have been on the point of departure, all their tents (with the exception of eight or ten) being struck. In a few minutes, three men appeared on the bank, and demanded why our boat travelled at night, and what we were laden with. Aboo Nasir answered, "We have troops on board, and are pursuing our journey; we are laden

with *fire*, with which, if you don't leave the bank, we shall accommodate you." Our querists took the hint as we intended, disappeared on the instant, and we were troubled with no farther questions.

March 15.—The windings of the river were exceedingly tortuous to-day. At one, P. M. we observed an extensive mark on the right bank of the river, the remains of an encampment, where one of the great Mecca caravans was plundered a hundred and thirty years ago. The place has been deserted ever since. It is called Mudduk-Il-Hujauje, and appears to have been of great extent, for we came again upon its ruins, at another turn of the river, several hours afterwards.

Towards evening, we saw the apparent remains of ancient buildings, in a northerly direction, and at dusk reached the village of Koote, which is considered half-way between Bussorah and Bagdad.

At this place, horses in any number are

always ready for the traveller who may wish to perform the rest of the journey to Bagdad by land. The distance is 120 miles, through a barren desert. In the dry season the journey is performed in thirty-six hours, when it is necessary to carry provisions and water, both for riders and horses ; but at this time of the year abundance of water is found in the Desert, as also numerous encampments of Arabs, so that the traveller may proceed at his leisure. Mr. Hamilton wished to avail himself of this opportunity, and horses were immediately put in requisition for his use, but we preferred remaining on board our boat, being anxious to visit the ruins of Seleucia and Ctesiphon, situate on the banks of the river.

March 16.—At daybreak, Mr. Lamb and myself went on shore to examine the neighbourhood. Koote is a small, square, and wretched mud-built village, surrounded by a wall, not more than six feet high ; and si

the first permanent establishment we have seen since we left Koorna. It is the residence of the powerful chieftain of the Benee Lam Arabs, whose influence extends as far as Goomruk to the south, and Bagdad to the north. Shut-ul-Hie, a navigable stream, runs opposite Koote, into the Euphrates. Two miles north of Koote, are the remains of a wall thrown across the neck of the peninsula, formed by the winding of the river.

To the north of the wall was a mound, covered with large sunburnt bricks, apparently the remains of a fortress; and, from the position of the whole, I should be inclined to think, it might have formed the field-work of a military camp. This place was called by the Arabs, Jubul Afeez. It is said to be coeval with the ruins at Filifileh and Sooroot. While we were examining these ruins, we put up great numbers of hares and partridges. We met also some men with greyhounds; these dogs are very beautiful animals, and

are somewhat smaller than the English breed ; the ears hang down, the tail is feathered, and both are covered with hair as fine as silk. The Arabs are very fond of this species ; but the dog being an unclean animal according to the Mahometan law, the Faithful are not allowed to touch it, except on the crown of the head, that being the only part of the animal which he is unable to pollute with his tongue.

The owner of these dogs was rather an anomalous being for an inhabitant of the Desert—a young Arab dandy ; his turban and robes were adjusted with the greatest neatness, his eyelids were stained with antimony, two or three rings graced each finger, and he conversed with an air of the most amusing puppyism.

In our excursion, we met Mr. Hamilton and his party. All were armed from head to foot ; he was accompanied by our Ethiopian servant, Yacoot, a guide, and five of our Arab guard, all of whom were mounted at his ex-

pense; the hire of each horse from Koote to Bagdad being ten piastres; the horses of the party were very small, and apparently ill calculated to sustain the fatigues of the journey; but of high blood, and accustomed to go through it with ease.

While waiting for our boat, I shot a crow, which our guard, after having roasted it by fire they made in the jungle, ate; though the crow is forbidden by the Mahometan as well as the Levitical law.*

We returned on board at eight in the morning, and tried to make way against a strong wind, which increased so much by ten o'clock, that our trackers, unable to proceed against it, were obliged to lay by till two in the afternoon, when the wind moderating, we continued our journey. This was the first time we were wind-bound.

During our detention, Arabs encamped in the vicinity brought cloaks, skins, and worsted

* Levit. chap. ix. verse 16.

yarn for sale; we procured two fine milk goats and kids, for which we paid eleven piastres. We passed a boat cutting fire-wood from the brush-wood of the jungle, for sale at Bagdad; this must be a scarce article, since a journey of 300 miles is made to obtain it.

At four, P. M. at a place called Ummuttumim, we came to a large canal, running in an easterly direction; the bed of which was filled up nearly to the level of the surrounding country, but the banks on both sides distinctly marked its course; the brick foundation of a wall was here visible. The canal appeared to fall into the Tigris, about two miles from the place where we approached it, and might have been made for the purpose of carrying off the superabundant waters of the river during the freshes, for which purpose, so many canals were said to have been formed in ancient Babylonia. We followed its course upwards of four miles to the northwest, but did not see its termination in that

direction. The river, to-day, has not been so winding as yesterday, though we have had one or two very abrupt turns.

Owing to the strong N.W. wind which has prevailed the whole of the day, our progress has been very slow, more so, indeed, than on any day since leaving Bussorah; the water is rapidly decreasing, as appears by the banks, which have fallen nearly six feet.

March 17.—The windings of the river increased, and the water continued to fall very rapidly. We saw great quantities of brushwood on both banks, and passed many boats laden with it. These vessels are of a very grotesque description, being nearly as broad as they are long, and deviate very little from the circular boat common to the Euphrates and Tigris: they are constructed of wicker, and coated with naphtha, and when laden with brushwood, piled twelve or fourteen feet high, appeared too unwieldy to be moved in any other direction than the current. We

stopped at noon to lay in a stock of firewood, having been informed we should not meet with any more jungle on our voyage.

At two, P. M., at an abrupt curve of the river, we passed Shifileh, a square brick fort, the residence of Sheikh Tyobeid, a powerful Arab chief, whose country extends from the right bank of the Shut-ul-Hic to Bagdad, while the left bank, from Koote to Bagdad, is under the influence of Sheikh Zummeir.

Shortly afterwards, we came upon some extensive ruins on the left bank of the river, which we landed to examine: indeed, from hence to Bagdad, this now desert tract bears the marks of having once been covered with large and populous cities. Previous to entering upon a description of this place, a few general observations are necessary respecting the appearance of all ruins of this once populous region.

The soil of ancient Assyria and Babylonia, consists of a fine clay, mixed with sand, with which, as the waters of the river retire, the shores are covered. This compost, when dried by the heat of the sun, becomes a hard and solid mass, and forms the finest material for the beautiful bricks for which Babylon was so celebrated. We all put to the test the adaptation of this mud for pottery, by taking some of it while wet from the bank of the river, and then moulding it into any form we pleased. Having been exposed to the sun for half an hour, it became as hard as stone. These remarks are important, as the indication of buildings throughout this region are different from those of other countries, the universal substitution of brick for stone being observable in all the numerous ruins we visited, including those of the great cities of Seleucia, Ctesiphon, and of the mighty Babylon her-

self, for which we have the authority of Scripture, that her builders “had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.”*

In consequence of this circumstance, the ruins now before us, which our guides called Mumliheh, instead of showing fragments of pillars, or any marks by which we might conjecture the order of architecture, exhibit an accumulation of mounds, which, on a dead flat, soon attract the eye of a traveller, and have at first sight the appearance of sandy hillocks. On a nearer inspection they prove to be square masses of brick, facing the cardinal points, and, though sometimes much worn by the weather, built with much regularity; the neighbourhood of these large mounds are strewn with fragments of tile, broken pottery, and manufactured vitreous substances. Coins, the incontestable proofs of former population, are generally to be found. In this place, they are so abundant,

* Gen. chap. xi. verse 3.

that many persons come from Bagdad in the dry season to search for them. Aboo Nasir told us, that some time ago he found a pot full of coins, and Mr. Hart picked up two, with apparently Cufic inscriptions, but their characters were not very decypherable. Near the place where they were found, was the fragment of a vessel which had possibly contained them.

Travellers, in making this tour, ought to provide themselves with instruments for digging, which would both facilitate their researches, and in all probability amply repay their curiosity.

At midnight, we passed the western side of a considerable island, by which the river is divided into two navigable channels. The nights are beautifully clear, and well suited to the study of astronomy ; which reminds us that we are in the land of the Chaldeans, the earliest professors of that science.

CHAPTER VII.

Tortuous course of the River—Extensive Ruins—Fire Temple—Devil's dance—Dawurree, a tribe of thieves and buffoons—Ruins of Seleucia—Camel-riding—Illustration of the Prophecy of Isaiah—Ancient Statue—Tradition—Powder Mill—Ctesiphon—Description of the Tauk, or Arch of Kisra—Suleiman Pauk—Historical notices of Seleucia and Ctesiphon—Arrival at Bagdad—Public Entrance—Mr. Hamilton's journey across the Desert—Anecdote of the Chief of the Artillery.

March 18.—THE river becomes more winding, as we ascend, forming a chain of peninsulas, which makes the distance by water fully three times longer than by land; the bed of the river is enlarged, and numerous banks are formed in it, rendering the navigation very difficult when the water is low. Our boat run a-ground several times

after leaving Koote, but being light, we got off without difficulty, and this happening at a time when the river is so high, proves that it must be wholly unnavigable in the dry season.

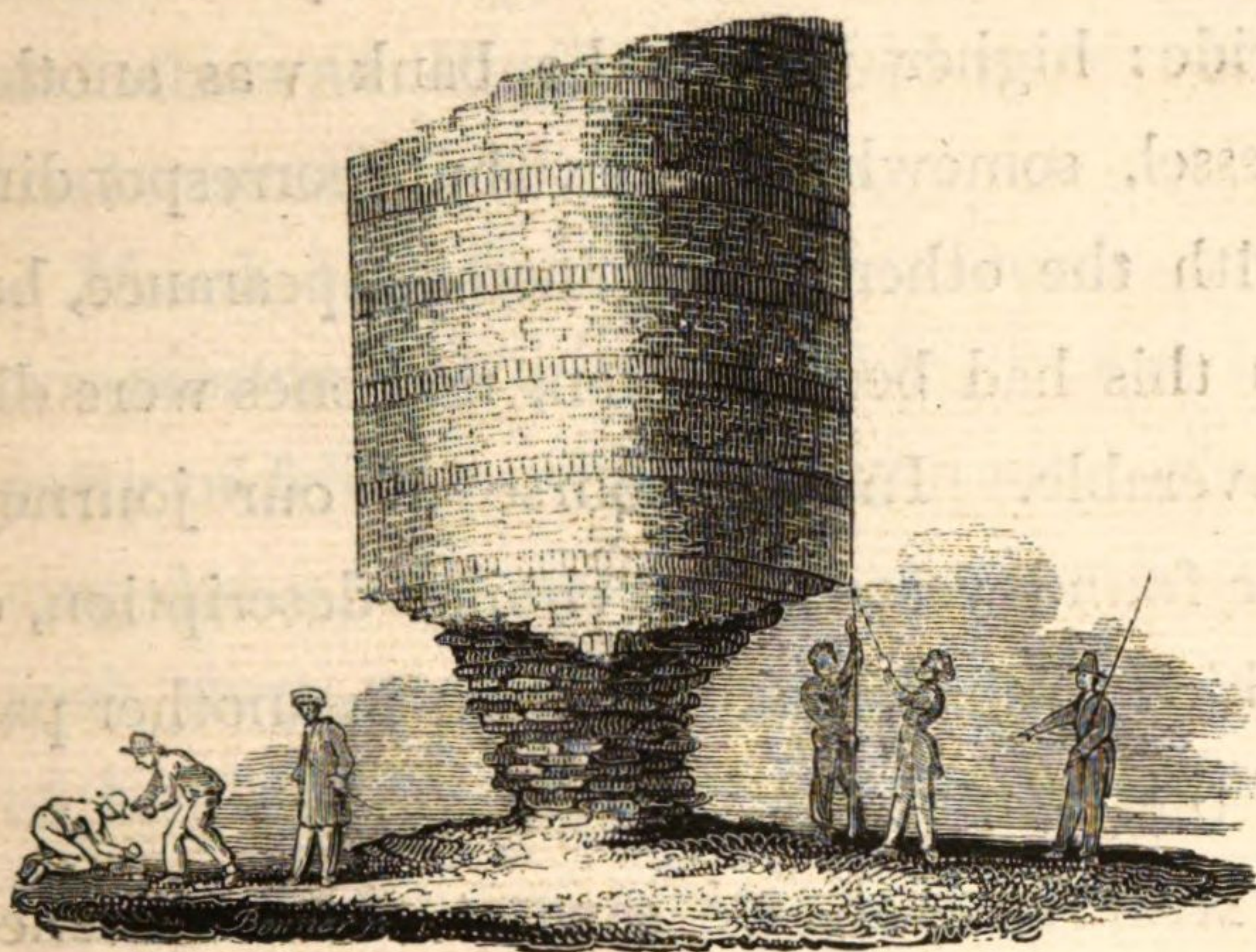
At noon, we passed extensive mounds on the north bank, which they told us were called Shejer; considered half way between Koote and Bagdad. An Arab whom we met here, informed us of Mr. Hamilton's arrival at Bagdad, yesterday, at the hour of afternoon prayer (four o'clock).

We passed to-day, numbers of turtles on the banks and shoals, which the rapid fall of the river had recently left exposed.

At noon, we examined some extensive mounds of the same general description as those we saw yesterday. One of our party picked up a brick with an inscription, but of a very imperfect character. Half a mile from the banks of the river was the portion of a pillar, composed of sun-burnt bricks, twenty

feet, two inches high, and sixty-three feet in circumference. It consisted of eight layers of bricks, several compartments of seven layers placed horizontally, and one vertically; between the layers was interspersed cement, one-half the thickness of the brick. The pillar stands at the eastern side of a large mass of ruins, apparently the remains of an extensive palace, or temple; that portion which is left, proves it to be detached, and there were evidently no means of ascending it: we were not provided with instruments with which we could open its base, or examine among the ruins for any part of its capital, or ornament, and we could gain no information respecting it. The annexed sketch will show the resemblance this pillar bears to those ancient columns so common in Ireland. Amongst the ruins we found some different kinds of glass, perfectly white and transparent, like flint-glass; the surface of which was corroded, indicating a long exposure. A

raised causeway extended due S. from these ruins, to some mounds apparently four



or five miles distant. Half a mile to the W. N. W. on the banks of the river are some mounds, the remains of a burying-ground, on which the river has evidently encroached, and recently washed down a considerable portion. At this place, was an earthenware vessel of an oval shape; this Mr. Hart broke open with his dagger, and found to contain the skeleton of a child,

which crumbled to pieces on being exposed to the air; the vessel was eighteen inches deep, three feet long, and twenty-two inches wide: higher up in the bank was another vessel, somewhat larger, but corresponding with the other in its general appearance, but as this had been broken, no bones were discoverable. In the course of our journey, we found vessels of a similar description, of which I shall make mention in another part of the journal.

Near sun-set, we saw at some distance, bearing south by west, an elevated mound, which Aboo Nasir called Gubri Bena, the temple of the Ghebers, or ancient fire-worshippers. As we looked upon Aboo Nasir to be less superstitious than his countrymen, we were not a little surprized to hear him gravely assert that a large troop of devils were in the habit of assembling at the temple every night, and dancing round it, amidst

flames of fire: he added, that many Arabs had seen them at a distance, that none had ever dared to approach the spot by night, and that no Englishman had ever visited the haunt of these evil spirits.

March 19.—Our boat was accompanied this morning for a considerable distance by a party of fellows, who kept up a kind of running dance, of a most grotesque description; with them, was a man playing a flute, made of bamboo, from which he managed to extract some kind of melody. They belonged to a tribe called Dawurree, and are countenanced by the Pasha of Bagdad; are professed thieves and buffoons, and said to be very skilful in both callings. As far as we could judge, their appearance certainly did not belie their vocations.

The banks of the river were lined with camels and cattle; and numerous encampment of Illyauts.

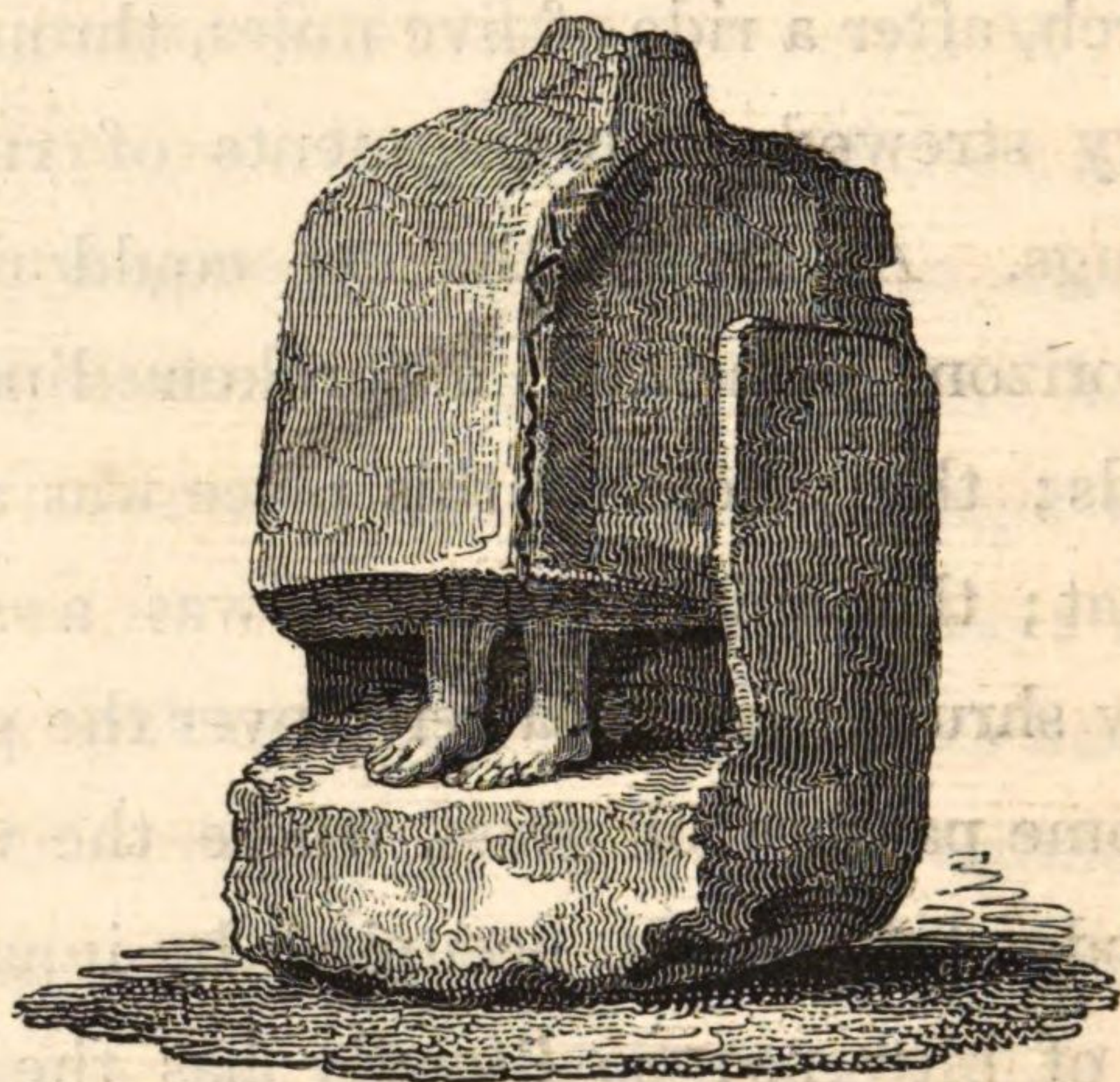
During the day, we passed an uninterrupted succession of mounds, the remains of the once magnificent cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon. At night, we came in sight of Tauk Kisra, an ancient arch, which we visited the following day.

March 20.—We landed first on the W. bank of the river, on the site of the ancient Seleucia. Having to go some distance in search of a statue, and not being able to procure horses, we each hired a camel from amongst some which we found grazing on the banks; these animals had nothing on their backs but the common wooden frame, or pack-saddle for carrying burthens, and were totally unprovided with any convenience for riding; so we each seated ourselves on their rumps, and guided them with a long stick, by striking their cheek on the opposite side to that which we wished them to go. I do not answer for my companions, some of whom

were fastidious respecting their conveyance, but for my own part, I thought the motion was not intolerable, nor so rough as to prevent me from writing legibly, while my beast was going his best walking-pace.

We reached the statue of which we were in search, after a ride of five miles, through a country strewn with fragments of ruined buildings. As far as the eye could reach, the horizon presented a broken line of mounds; the whole of this place was a desert flat; the only vegetation was a small prickly shrub, thinly scattered over the plain, and some patches of grass, where the water had lodged in pools, occupied by immense flocks of bitterns: so literally has the prophecy of Isaiah been fulfilled, respecting devoted Babylon, that it should be "swept with the besom of destruction," that it should be made "a possession for the bittern and pools of water."

The statue was lying on the ground near the remains of some extensive buildings. It consisted of the lower portion of a figure in a sitting posture in long vestments, the form of which prove them to belong to a female. It



is executed with considerable skill, particularly the ornamental part of the robe, and the feet, which are exceedingly well delineated. The figure is seated on a square stool, standing on a base ten inches thick, apparently for

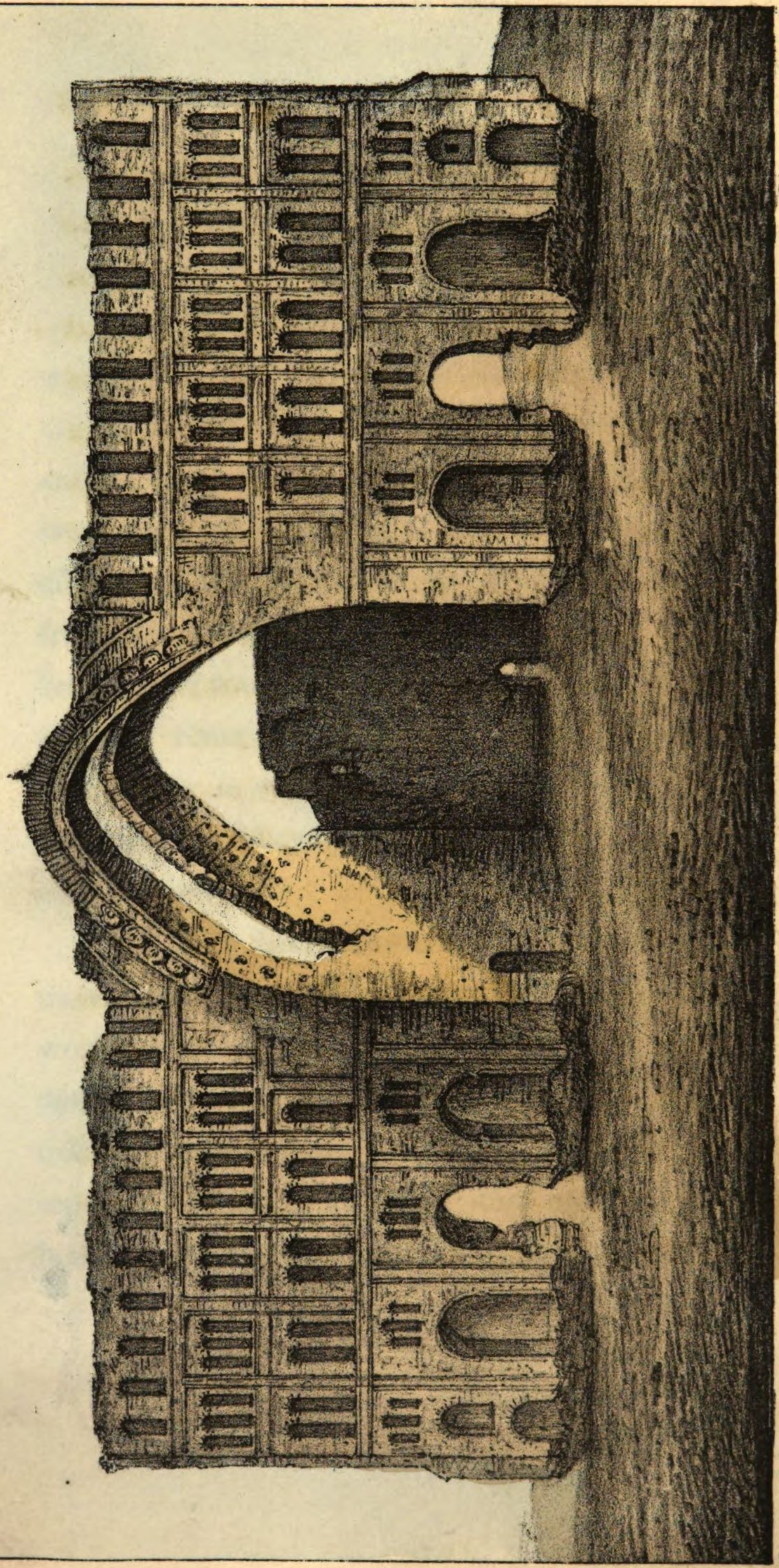
the purpose of fixing it in its place, as it is left rough ; the upper portion is broken off, as it would seem from having fallen down from a height. This is indicated by the manner of the fracture, which is obliquely downwards, while the stone is rent throughout. The entire figure appears to consist of a block of compact granite, of great tenacity, as we found on making an unsuccessful attempt to break off a small portion from the fractured part.

Our guides had as usual, a tradition respecting the ruins and the statue. The city, they said, was destroyed by the Almighty, for the sins of the people. In former times, a brother and sister, both very beautiful, were so constantly together, that, as they grew up, an improper attachment was formed, and God to punish them, turned them to stone.

We returned a different way from that which we came, but the same signs of building were apparent : the people who ac-

accompanied us on foot, picked up four copper coins, but they were so much corroded that they could not be made out. On our return, we passed what appears to have been the W. wall of the city, composed of sun-dried bricks, with layers of reeds. It is of great thickness, and in many places, notwithstanding its long exposure to the washing of the rains, upwards of twenty feet high. It stands about a mile from the present channel of the river; the line of the southern wall can also be traced, and the remains of a mound running east. The water is encroaching in this direction, and has washed away the eastern wall, if such ever existed.

The Turks have established a gunpowder manufactory, at which we found some men at work: the ruins of a small square fort, evidently of a later erection, stand about the middle of the southern wall, from which it is separated a hundred yards, and must have been commanded from it. The form of the



Cap. Horn, del.

Printed by Engelmann & Co.

TAOUK KISTRA A RUINED ARCH ON THE SITE OF CTESIPHON.

interior building, which is of burnt bricks, can still be traced, and we saw a well on one of the bastions. Though a brisk wind was blowing, the heat was very oppressive, and we were glad to get to the protection of the boat. We found a servant of Aga Saikeis, the British agent at Bagdad, waiting on board, with a letter from Mr. Hamilton, informing us, that apartments were preparing in the agent's house, and that horses would be sent to this place to take us on to Bagdad.

In the afternoon, we crossed over to the E. bank near to the Tauk (Arch), which we went to examine, after having rested a couple of hours. It stands about half a mile from the river, the intervening space being entirely covered with brick mounds, which, in every direction, appeared to extend as far as we could see. We rode on asses, which we obtained on hire. The annual fair, which is held at the tomb of Suleiman

Pauk (a Mahometan saint), terminated yesterday, and a number of the visitors still remained. The view of the ruin far exceeded our expectations. From a scene of broken walls entirely devoid of ornament, we came suddenly in sight of this large and noble pile of building. The arch in the centre is, according to our measurement, eighty-five feet wide, and one hundred and one feet high; the curve of the arch forms a large parabola, springing from about half the height; this leads to a vaulted hall of the same breadth and height, one hundred and fifty-seven feet long; this is the only portion of the interior, of which the roof remains: the back is also broken down, as are fifteen feet towards the front: the ceiling is pierced with a number of holes at regular distances, which, according to our conductors, formerly held chandeliers. The whole is built of well-made kiln-burnt bricks, one foot square and three inches thick; but they do not, as is generally asserted, belong to the Baby-

lonian ruins. The massive structure of the whole building has saved it from a similar fate from the roof. It does not appear to have suffered much dilapidation since it was visited by Ives, in 1758 ; and, if left to the effect of time, may endure for many years. The walls that support the arch are fifteen feet thick ; four tiers of arches remain, diminishing in succession. Tradition asserts that the palace when entire, was double its present height.

While we were engaged in our measurements, a Turk attended by a large suite, dismounted and spread his mat near us. We sat down, smoked a pipe together, and drank some coffee, while he directed one of his attendants to ascend the top of the building, a work of some difficulty. The crowd seemed to admire our measuring line, and the facility with which we wrote with our pencils. One of our party, in opening his coat to look for a pencil, discovered to the bystanders a small pistol in each waistcoat

pocket. Significant glances were exchanged by the crowd, who seemed impressed with a high opinion of our desperate courage, from having concealed arms about us. With the Asiatic traveller, his weapons of defence are the most conspicuous appendages of his dress, his object being more to intimidate the robber from attempting an assault than to resist when attacked.

From the ruins, we went to the tomb of Suleiman Pauk, whose name has superseded that of the builder of this magnificent pile, in giving a name to the district. The tomb is a small building with a dome; the interior (to which they allowed us access, on our pulling off our shoes), was ornamented with arabesque arches, and the surrounding enclosure was used as a caravanserai.

Suleiman Pauk, or Solomon the Clean, was the contemporary and zealous partisan of Mahomet, and is now the patron saint of the

barbers, who come from Bagdad in annual procession to visit his tomb.

Seleucia stands prominent in the page of history, as having caused the final destruction of Babylon. On the death of Alexander the Great, which happened in the latter city as he was about to rebuild the Tower of Babel, his immediate successor in Asia, Seleucus Nicator, built Seleucia for the avowed purpose of ruining Babylon. The spot selected, though now a desert, was at that time the most fertile of the East. Seleucia which became the metropolis of Assyria, was formed on a Greek model, and received from the founder a free constitution. Such attractions soon drew from the already exhausted Babylon its few remaining inhabitants, and the population of the new city increased so rapidly, that, according to Pliny, it soon amounted to six hundred thousand. Seleucia continued to flourish for several

centuries; and that author, who lived five hundred years after the foundation, says, that even in his time it still enjoyed the blessings of freedom—"Libera hodie ac sui juris."*

Meanwhile Ctesiphon appears to have been a small town on the opposite bank. As the Seleucians, who were a free people, would naturally view with jealousy the establishment of a military force within their walls, the monarchs were accustomed to quarter in Ctesiphon their Scythian soldiers, who performed the same military service at that period, which their descendants, the wandering tribes, do for the sovereigns of the present day.

Seleucia suffered at the hands of the Parthians the same fate which she had inflicted on Babylon. Ctesiphon, in her turn, became a great and populous city, the capital of the kingdom. In the time of the Emperor Ju-

* Plin. lib. 6. cap. xxvi.

lian, she was in the zenith of her glory ; and the recollection becomes more interesting, from being connected with the history of that singular character, the splendour of whose great and good qualities has been obscured by the forbidding though well-merited epithet of “The Apostate.”

Ctesiphon is said by Ammianus Marcellinus, the historian and contemporary of Julian, to have been built by Vardanes, and afterwards beautified and walled by Pacorus, a Parthian king. This city is by some supposed to be the site of Calneh, in the land of Shinar, mentioned in Genesis* : and Pliny's placing Ctesiphon in Chalonitis,† favours the idea. Why not too the expression in the sixth chapter of Amos, applicable to this, “Pass ye into Calneh and see.”

* And the beginning of his (Nimrod's) kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and *Calneh*, in the land of Shinar. — Chap. x. ver. 10.

† Ctesiphontem juxta tertium lapidem in Chalonitide condidere Parthi. — Plin. lib. vi. cap. xxvi. p. 136.

Ctesiphon and Seleucia were subsequently united under the name of Il Medayn the dual number of an Arabic word, signifying two cities which Nooshirvan, surnamed Kisra the Just, adorned with many beautiful palaces, the principal of which was the Tauk or Arch, which I have described. Gibbon gives a detailed account of the sacking of this palace by the Saracens, and of the immense wealth found within the walls. The barbarians seemed struck with the riches, and, as they entered, exclaimed, "This is the white palace of Chosroes!—this is the promise of the apostle of God!"

We returned on board at dusk, intending to resume our examination next day; but Aboo Nasir, as tipsy as usual, had weighed and sailed without our knowledge. Luckily a strong breeze sprang up from the southward, which brought us in the morning off the renowned city of Bagdad.

March 21.—As we approached the sub-

urbs, the novelty of our dress attracted numbers of people on the bank. There were several women in the crowd, who did not scruple to lift up their veils, the better to indulge their curiosity. Some of them set up the same kind of cry, as that with which the women welcomed the new governor into Bussorah. They have tolerably good features, but their pale pink complexions strongly mark their state of habitual seclusion. Their robes, being open as far as the chest, leave the person considerably exposed.

Our boat was moored near the gates of the town. An hour after, two of the agent's Tchousses (avant couriers) came to tell us that the horses had been sent to Suleiman Pauk, but that they would soon return. Hearing this, we proposed walking; but the Tchousses stared with astonishment at the idea of an Englishman compromising his dignity so much, as to walk in the streets

at noon-day. As this was impracticable, we remained for another hour, when the horses arrived at last, and with them came a host of attendants, who accompanied us into Bagdad. One of them, a mounted Tchouss, went before us with his bâton of office, a silver stick surmounted with a gilt ball of filigree work. Our horses' bridles were very handsomely ornamented, and the furniture of our saddles, which covered nearly the whole body of the horse, consisted of velvet studded with gilt and silver nobs. In short, we entered the city with a state that would have better befitted ambassadors than private travellers.

We were received with much attention by Aga Saikeis, the British agent. Shortly after our arrival, the Pasha's secretary sent a message welcoming us to Bagdad, and apologizing for not visiting us in person.

On meeting with Mr. Hamilton, he gave

us a lively description of his journey across the Desert, which we here repeat, to help the choice of a future traveller between the land and water journey.

“On the 18th, Mr. Hamilton passed through several encampments of Arabs, from whom he experienced all those rites of hospitality for which those tribes are celebrated. He describes the plain as being in some parts quite alive with numerous encampments and their attendant herds of camels, oxen, and horses. At nine in the evening, he came to the bed of a very broad canal, the banks of which are thirty feet high.

“He saw vast quantities of birds, called bitterns, of which the Scriptures tell us that Babylonia was to become the possession.

“He met an Arab Bey, attended by four men well armed and mounted; these carried hawks on their wrists, and were followed by several greyhounds. Mr. Hamilton drank

coffee with his new acquaintance out of cups with gold saucers. The Bey was very civil, and promised to show him some good hawking on a future occasion.

He slept the first part of the night in the tent of an Arab, the father of two beautiful girls. A sheep was brought to the tent door, and milked by one of his fair hostesses ; a carpet was spread for him in the upper part of the tent, a fire was lighted, and he was regaled with pipes, coffee, milk, butter, and a sheep roasted whole. He bivouacked from one till three o'clock in the morning, to rest his cattle. On resuming the march, the cold was so intense, that his party were obliged to alight from their horses and make a fire with some brushwood they found in the jungle. The heat during the day had been nearly insupportable, and the opposite extreme at this time brings to mind Jacob's spirited remonstrance with his father-in-law, Laban, when in a similar situation. " In

the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night.”*

They were all huddled round the fire, when a soldier gave the alarm of robbers. They were up in arms in a moment ; but the enemy, on seeing their numbers, made off.

On the 19th, he saw the ruins of a circular building, which, from its description, must have resembled that we saw on the banks of the Tigris.† It was forty feet in diameter, and built of red bricks fourteen inches square.

Every flock of sheep that he saw in the night was attended by three or four armed men. At midnight he reached another encampment, and met with treatment similar to that of the night before.

The Arab, in whose tent he was breakfasting, was told by a boy, that a party had carried off some of his sheep : he seized his sword and spear, snatched a musket from one

* Gen xxi. verse 40.

† Vide page 121.

of the soldiers, mounted his horse bare-backed, and in one moment was scouring across the Desert.

They resumed their march on the morning of the 20th, and reached Bagdad in the afternoon.

In the evening, we went to the Hummaum, (hot bath) not quietly as we wished, but with the same retinue as in the morning. A Turkish Hummaum has been so often described, that it will be sufficient to mention our having undergone the whole process of kneading, cracking joints, and champooing. After the bath, we were, by the civility of Aga Saikeis, regaled with iced water, pipes, coffee, and sherbet; we were then sprinkled with rose-water; and frankincense was brought us to perfume our mustaches.

March 22.—We received a visit next morning from the chief of the artillery to the Pasha of Bagdad. He was a tall thin man,

about sixty years of age ; his weather-beaten face had been bronzed by a long exposure to an Eastern sun ; formidable white mustaches graced his upper lip ; and over his eyes were a pair of ferocious bushy eyebrows, the peculiar elevation of which infallibly stamped him a Frenchman.

The variety observable in his dress marked the true Soldado : the buttons of his coat were adorned with the imperial crown and initial of Napoleon ; from the button-hole was suspended a croix of Louis the Desired ; and a flaming pair of capacious Turkish trowsers bespoke his present service. The top of this gaunt figure was crowned with a small hat, which rested on his left ear.

With the volubility which so strongly characterizes his nation, he dilated on every subject. Hearing my name mentioned, he inquired of me if I was related to "the unfortunate Keppel." Perceiving that he con-

founded the fate of the two admirals,* I attempted to convince him that it was Byng, and not Keppel, who had been unfortunate; but he interrupted me with a "*pardonnez*," and assured the company that an English friend of his threw up his commission in consequence of Keppel's execution.

* Admiral Byng was tried and executed in 1757. Admiral Keppel was tried and acquitted in 1779, and, in 1782, was made First Lord of the Admiralty.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Pasha's Garden—Armenian Church—Our Host's Policy—Monastery of Calendars—Tomb of Zobeide—Visit to the Catholic Bishop of Bagdad—Anecdote—Journey to Babylon—Our Establishment—Description of a Caravanserai—Our first Night's Lodging.

IN the afternoon we visited one of the Pasha's gardens—our heads full of the splendid descriptions in the Arabian Nights. Though not so sanguine as to expect a garden like that in which Ibrahim entertained the fair Persian, we hoped at least to see something like Eastern magnificence in the summer retreat of a three-tailed Basha. We were doomed to be disappointed. The

garden, comprising eight or ten acres, and enclosed within a mud wall, contained a confused assemblage of shrubs and fruit-trees. A summer-house on the banks of the Tigris, well worthy of the garden, was a rickety little building, where dirt, damp, and neglect, had obliterated nearly every trace of the fresco daubings of flowers, with which the walls had once been decorated.

To compensate in some degree for this destruction of our air-built castles, we had, from the windows of the summer-house, a fine view of Bagdad and its neighbourhood.

In our way home, we stopped in a small by-street to visit the Armenian church, which looked, indeed, as if it belonged to a despised and persecuted religion ; and gave us an idea of what our churches might have been in the early times of Christianity. The door by which we entered was not above five feet high, and the exterior of the building had nothing to distinguish it from the humble

dwellings in its neighbourhood. An old grey-bearded priest admitted us through an inner court into the church. It was a small narrow apartment; at the east end stood an altar, decorated with faded silk and silver tinsel; a few wax tapers on the tables were lighted by the priest, who seemed anxious that his church should be seen to the best advantage. A few paltry daubs hung upon the walls, executed with the true Eastern contempt for perspective. One represented Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac, with the anachronism of the Crucifixion of our Saviour in the background.

In the course of conversation, we mentioned to Aga Saikeis our wish to be acquainted with the Pasha of Bagdad. Perceiving his unwillingness to introduce us, we pressed him for his reasons; and were not a little surprised to find, that our omitting to call upon the Pasha was to form part of a plan he

had in view to frighten that potentate, and, by so doing, to render him subservient to his own purposes.

To explain our host's policy, it may be mentioned, that some time before our arrival at Bussorah, Captain Taylor, the political agent, had, for some infraction of the treaty on the part of the Pasha, hauled down the British flag, and did not intend to hoist it again till he had received instructions from the Indian Government. Shortly after this, the Alligator had arrived at Bussorah, and the Pasha's brother had taken possession of his government.

A British man-of-war anchoring off Bussorah was an event so unusual, that it struck alarm into the mind of the new governor, who, soon after our visit, wrote to his brother at Bagdad, informing him that a king's ship had arrived for some especial purpose; that a large European force was on board (so he termed the marines); and that four Europeans

(meaning our party) were about to proceed to Persia through Bagdad, as he surmised, on some political mission.

These concurring, though accidental circumstances, were such as would naturally alarm an Asiatic, ignorant of our customs. It was with a view of keeping alive these fears, that Aga Saikeis wished to prevent our waiting upon the Pasha; by which he intended to make it appear, that we, the pseudo-diplomatists, had received instructions from our Government thus to express a negative disapprobation of the Pasha's conduct.

March 23.—Mr. Hamilton and I went this morning to the opposite bank, to visit a monastery of wandering dervishes, called Calendars, of which sect mention is made in the Arabian Nights. The bridge, which we crossed on horseback, had a somewhat alarming appearance. It was formed by a number of boats, irregularly fastened together, and

surmounted by a narrow platform made of the trunks of date-trees. This, in many places, was full of holes; and, as there was no balustrade, and a crowd was constantly passing to and fro, the slightest start of our horses would have precipitated us into the river. When the wind sets in at the S. E., the bridge becomes impassable, and the communication between Bagdad and its suburbs is suspended for several days.

At a quarter of a mile from the bridge is the monastery, presenting the appearance of substantial neatness. On the walls are numerous inscriptions in the Arabic and Cufic characters, and one of considerable length over the gateway. In the court-yard are a number of fruit-trees, principally the orange and the vine.

On dismounting from our horses, we were conducted to the Skeikh Calendar (the Superior of the monastery). He was seated on a

tiger's skin, in a room describing three sides of a square of twenty-eight feet, and about forty high. We saw fixed on the walls several rude iron instruments, which had been implements of war prior to the use of fire-arms, and had been presented to the monastery by various contributors. There were also some brass urns, a number of ostrich eggs, and some white stones, fixed in the walls. The Sheikh wore a low drab cloth turban, bound round with green, called the *tajee derveishaun* (dervish's cap); the other Calendars had caps of a similar shape, with red tassels. From the neck of each Calendar were suspended a circular onyx-stone, with indented edges, somewhat bigger than a crown-piece (this was called the *sung-i-tulsim*, or *talismanic stone*), and one somewhat larger, called the *sung-i-canaut* (the stone of repose), emblematic of the peaceful life of the wearer. Round the

waist was worn a stone of an oval form, called the Kumberia, which accompanies the wearer to the grave.

The Sheikh was a clever talkative little man, and possessed that agreeable vivacity and store of anecdote which are occasionally found in men who have had much intercourse with the world. He had seen various countries, and spoke Persian with great fluency—in which language we conversed. On our approaching him, he vociferated a dozen doggrel rhymes in token of his self-abasement, calling himself a Jew, an infidel, a rogue, and a drunkard. As he repeated these frequently, I caught the following lines, which may serve as a specimen of the metre :—

Hērkēh pōōshūm

Bāūd-ī-nōōshūm

Mēēfērōōshūm.

He next began a long speech, thanking us for the honour we had conferred on a poor

dervish who had quitted the world ; though, from his lively conversation, there was little of the anchorite perceptible in him. We were very anxious to learn some account of his Order ; but he was so fond of hearing himself talk, that we were obliged to let him have his own way. He dwelt much on the forbearing and pacific doctrine of the Calendars' code ; and told us that for a blow given no blow would be returned, but the simple ejaculation of "God's will be done !" We observed, however, that no Calendar was without a dagger in his girdle. He informed us the monastery was built by the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, nine hundred and twenty-five years ago : he also showed us a picture, which he said was intended to represent the circumstance of an European king coming to pay his respects to the King of the Calendars. In the adjoining room we were shown a small niche, in which the Calendars are supposed to sit. It was covered

with Arabic inscriptions—most probably quotations from the Koraun.

On returning to the first room, the Sheikh gave us pipes and coffee, and an excellent breakfast of milk, dates, and sweetmeats ; after which we took our leave, much pleased with the eccentricity of our reception.

The Arabian Nights furnish but few details respecting this Order : the only place in which they are mentioned, is the story in which three sons of kings, all blind of the right eye, assume the habits of Calendars, and sup with the three sisters, where they meet Haroun Alraschid, the Vizier Giaffer, and Mesrour, the chief of the Eunuchs. These Calendars were said to have shaved their beards and eyebrows ; by which it would seem, that formerly such a custom formed a part of the duties of a Calendar, but I was not able to extract from our talkative host any elucidation of this custom. The Calendars, so called from Calendar, the name

of their founder, are a sect of Mahometan dervishes, whose debauched morals and vagabond habits give great offence to their more orthodox brethren. They wander as mendicants over all parts of Asia. In India they wear a party-coloured dress, to denote, as I should suppose, their extreme poverty.

In returning home, we visited the tomb of Zobeide, the wife of Haroun Alraschid : even when new, it must have been very inferior to what we should naturally have expected in honour of the favourite of so renowned a caliph. The building under which Zobeide lies buried, is a column formed of a pyramid of polygons of thirty feet high, decreasing in number of sides towards the vertex. The interior of this building is seven paces and a half wide ; in it are three tombs of brickwork, in a very dilapidated state, containing the bodies of the mother of one Pasha, and the son of another : in the third is all that now remains of the once beautiful Zobeide. There

is no appearance of any inscription to perpetuate her memory : the only one visible in the building was to Ali Bey, the son of Mohumud Pasha ; nor were there any traces of ornamental work, so common in the Arabic buildings.

We have been kept such close prisoners, ever since our arrival in Bagdad, that we have not been permitted to leave the house without a numerous train of attendants. Against this ridiculous and petty annoyance remonstrance has been tried without effect. We are answered by an appeal to our pride, that “ the English name is great in Bagdad,” and that it would be wrong in us to compromise it, by doing any thing so derogatory to the Turkish ideas of great men, as to go into the streets unattended. It is in vain that we tell Aga Saikeis that such observations are inapplicable to private travellers like ourselves, who have no wish to be taken for great men : but no ; he is deaf to our entreaties for liberty ;

and we are obliged to submit with the best grace we can. This evening we wished to see a mosque that had been built by Haroun Alraschid ; and knowing that a large retinue would attract a crowd, we tried to escape from our guard, and to steal out unperceived, but without success ; our persecutors soon overtook, and preceded us as usual. These men, thinking it impossible that we could go out except on a visit of ceremony, conducted us by mistake to the house of the Catholic Bishop of Bagdad. This gentleman had been sent out by the French Government, and, as it is supposed, will shortly be appointed Consul for that nation.

We found in the Bishop, all that politeness and vivacity which form the characteristics of the Frenchman. Although we were at first disappointed at not finding the object of our search, we soon forgot our chagrin, by listening to his agreeable conversation.

The Bishop detailed to us, with consider-

able humour, the account of his journey by the caravan, across the Desert, from Aleppo to this place. He told us that he had been robbed three times by the wandering tribes. On one of these occasions, the robbers, seeing him with a very neat and clean pair of boots, were so polite and obliging as to take them off his feet, without giving him the trouble to dismount: at the same time one of the gang was about to seize a small chest containing all his valuables; but this was saved, by one of the fellow's comrades desiring him to leave it alone, as it only contained medicines, or, according to the Bishop's version of the story, "*Bah! c'est un Franc, il n'a que la medicine.*"

March 24. At four this afternoon, our arrangements being complete for our visit to the ruins of Babylon, we left Bagdad with the buoyant spirit of schoolboys breaking up for the holidays, so pleased were we at leav-

ing our state-prison, and exchanging it for the pure air of the Desert.

Our present establishment consisted of the Syyud, who continued to officiate as cook ; Yacoot the Ethiopian, who, upon our drawing lots for him, fell to Mr. Hart ; Yusuf, an Armenian, was Mr. Lamb's servant ; Mohumud Ali, Mr. Hamilton's ; and Hajee Ali, my own. As we had frequently to speak of our servants in their presence, and as some of them understood English, we deemed it necessary to designate each by some epithet which he could not understand : thus, we called the Syyud, "the Descendant of the Prophet ;" the Ethiopian, "the Raven," from his hoarse voice and black colour ; the Armenian, the "Dandy," from the care he paid to his toilet ; Mohumud Ali, the well deserved appellation of "the Poliçon ;" and Hajee Ali, "the Camel," from the resemblance his face and figure bore to that animal.

Some apology is necessary for introducing these vagabonds to notice ; but they occasionally afforded much amusement to us, and often dissipated the ennui of a dull and oppressive march. In addition to these, who were well armed and mounted, we took with us our old friend and messmate, Aboo Nasir, the mounted Tchous of Aga Saikais, and six of our old Arab guard, who were also mounted and armed at all points ; a precaution more than usually necessary, from the circumstance of a caravan having been plundered only two days previous to our march.

Each of our party rode his own horse, and mules were hired to carry our attendants ; we also had a firman (order) from the Pasha, to be supplied with whatever we might require on the journey.

The traveller finds himself in the Desert the moment he is outside the walls of Bagdad. The first part of the road is a beaten track, formed by the constant journeying of

pilgrims to the tomb of their patron Saint, Ali, the cousin of Mahomet, who is buried to the westward of Babylon, at Meshed Ali, to which place he has given the name. Fully to appreciate the pleasure of our mode of travelling—and while the novelty lasted, it was not without its charms—all ideas of European expedition or comfort must be set aside. We seldom went faster than a foot-pace, and the stoppages were so numerous, from the laziness and inattention of our muleteers, that our rate rarely exceeded two miles an hour.

Before dark, we saw Tauk Kisra, about six miles to the E. At two fursukhs* from Bagdad, we passed the caravanserai of Kiahya Khan, which, from its vicinity to the city, is seldom used. One of these caravanserais is to be found at the distance of two fursukhs from the other, the whole way between Bagdad and Meshed Ali: they have been

* The fursukh, by the Greeks spelt *παρσάνγος* *parasangus*, comprised thirty stadia, about four English miles.

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erected by the piety of some rich Persian pilgrims, for the benefit of their countrymen in general. From the earliest periods, caravanserais have been established in Oriental countries, and at about the same distance from each other, as at present. Herodotus enumerates one hundred and eleven of these *stathmi*, or mansions, in the dominions of the King of Persia, all of which he describes as being beautiful and splendid.

At nine in the evening we arrived at Assad Khan, where we, or rather our servants, found the best accommodations occupied by other travellers, who, by virtue of the Pasha's firman, were unceremoniously turned out to make way for us. This caravanserai, which differed but little from any that we afterwards saw, was a quadrangular building, with a court-yard. In the centre was a square, comprising about forty feet of solid masonry, raised three feet, called the Bauri Kesh, for travellers' baggage. The entire

building occupied about two acres of ground: a range of cloisters, having a succession of recesses ten feet in breadth and height, served either as apartments for travellers, or as mangers for their cattle—to both of which purposes we applied them.

Having arrived some hours after dark, completely harassed by travelling by night, we had to wait for some time before we could procure a light. The fire that was boiling water for our tea, nearly suffocated us with its smoke; our mules, which were close to us, almost stunned us with the incessant jingling of their bells; our servants kept up a constant and angry chattering; our horses, a loud and continual neigh; while we, by our bitter lamentations, added to the general discord. Our beds, composed only of Persian carpets, were but a poor defence, to our bruised bones, against the hardness and unevenness of the ill-paved floor. If to these grievances were added the attacks of myriads

of fleas, which did not leave us till they had marked us like lepers, it will be allowed that we must have passed any thing but an agreeable night.

CHAPTER IX.

Bir-iunus—Caravans of Persian Pilgrims—Mode of Travelling — Women — Corpses — Coffins — Iskanderia — Earthenware Coffins—Mohowel—An old Man and his Wives—Distant appearance of the Ruins of Babylon—Reasons for supposing the Ruins to be those of Babylon—Causes of Deterioration—Mujillebe Mound—Illustration of the Prophecy of Isaiah—Hilleh—Population — Musjid Eshams — Babylonian inscriptions—Bricks—Cylinders—Throwing the Jereed—Sham fight —Tower of Babel—Babylonian boats—Earthenware tombs—Statue of a Lion—Hanging Gardens—Palace.

AT daylight the following morning we left our comfortless lodging, and stopped to breakfast at Bir-iunus, another caravanserai, eight miles distant. At these halting-places the traveller is always sure of being supplied,

at a moderate price, with eggs, poultry, dates, sweet limes, and generally with mutton and kid.

We saw, in the course of the day, various caravans of Persians; some going to, and others returning from, their pilgrimage. We were much gratified by the picturesque appearance of these passing groups.

The higher class of Persians were generally mounted on good horses, unencumbered by any burthen except the apparatus of the kuleoon, or Persian pipe. Two or three servants, mounted on horses lightly laden with baggage, formed the *suite* of one person. The equipages are always very light—a Persian rejecting, as superfluous, many travelling articles that would with us be deemed indispensable. The bed, for instance, is a small carpet of the size of a hearth-rug.

In each caravan, the women comprised about a third of the party. The wives of the rich rode astride on horses; those of the

poorer class were either placed on the baggage-cattle, or seated in a pair of covered panniers slung across a mule—one woman in each pannier. The most remarkable, and not the least numerous part of this assemblage, was the crowd of defunct Shiahs, whose corpses were going to be buried at the tomb of the patron Saint. These bodies were enclosed in common wooden coffins, in shape and size not unlike those used by the lower orders in England: two of them were slung across one mule. One man had generally the charge of six or eight bodies.

The men who convey these corpses to Meshed Ali are not the relations of the deceased parties, but persons who gain a livelihood by this peculiar occupation.

No order of march seemed to be observed in the caravans—the living and dead were indiscriminately jumbled together. Often, when halted for the night, the coffins were thrown down in the first vacant space in the

caravanserai, and the bodies, though embalmed, were not so impervious to a burning sun as to be free from a most disagreeable smell. According to Niebuhr, 2000 dead and 5000 living annually go to Meshed Ali. Besides the corpses which come direct from Persia for interment, many are brought from India for the same purpose.

Three miles from Bir-i-unus, the road branches off in a south-west direction to Meshed Ali. At twelve o'clock we came to a caravanserai, which, in common with the district, is called Iskanderia. Iskanderia, or Roomia, are names given by Oriental nations to the remains of towns supposed to have been built by Alexander the Great, who is well known in the East as Iskander Roomee (*Alexander of Greece*). Here we saw large and extensive mounds, exhibiting the same appearance as the ruins of Seleucia and Ctesiphon. A quarter of a mile to the north-

ward of these mounds, and in a situation that would have constituted the exterior of the town, we saw some circular earthenware vessels, similar to those containing human bones, which we had seen on the banks of the Tigris on the 13th of March.

From the name of the place, and its vicinity to Babylon, it seems fair to infer that these mounds are the remains of some town built by Alexander the Great, although no mention is made in ancient authors of a city on this precise spot. The nearest town, of the name of Alexandria, is placed by D'Anville on the banks of the Pallacopa.

If we consider the ease and facility with which Alexander built such towns as Alexandria, on the banks of the Iaxartes, said to be in circumference three leagues, the ramparts and houses of which were, according to Rollin, completed in twenty days,—it is not unreasonable to suppose that he might

have built a town in the neighbourhood of his capital, though no mention should be made of it by his *contemporaries*.

In the evening we arrived at a caravanserai, called Mohowel. A squinting old man came in shortly after, attended by four women, to one of whom he gave a good beating for turning back to look at our party. On dismounting from their horses, the four women retired to one of the small recesses, and were concealed from the rest of the company by a curtain placed before it.

Within a mile of the caravanserai is the bed of a large canal, and near it a considerable mound of bricks. Mr. Hart, and some of our servants, picked up two or three copper coins, but they were so thickly incrustated with verdigrise, that the impressions were undecipherable. I found a brick, with an inscription in the arrow-headed characters: it was coated with a vitrified, or bituminous substance, of so hard a composition,

that I broke the brick in attempting to chip a bit off.

From this place, the ruins of the once mighty Babylon are distinctly visible, presenting the appearance of a number of irregular and mis-shapen hills. Fourteen miles to the N. N. E. is the Tower of Babel, now known by the name of Nimrod's Tower.* Since my return to England, I have been occasionally asked, what grounds I had for supposing the ruins I visited were those of Babylon. Rennell has so completely established† their identity with that city, that I shall merely state the following reasons for my belief.

The place in question is still called Babel, by the natives of the country. The traditions of Oriental writers, and those of the neighbouring Arabs, assign the highest antiquity to the ruins. The accounts given by ancient authors agree with the Oriental traditions.

* Ber's Nimrod.

† Rennell's Geography of Herodotus.

The appearance of the place answers the description given by those authors,* and the position agrees in the relative distance of Babylon from other great cities: the city of Seleucia,† for instance, to the north-east, and that of Is‡ to the north-west. The ruins seen by me correspond with all ancient accounts, both in their geographical relation to Babylon, and to the peculiar description of building. The appearance of the fallen city is precisely that which the divine writings predict Babylon should exhibit after her downfall. The geographical accounts convince me, that Babylon could not have stood else-

* Herodotus, Quintus Curtius, Pliny, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo.

† According to Strabo, and the Theodosian tables, Seleucia was forty-four Roman miles from Babylon.

‡ “ Within an eight days’ journey from Babylon is a city called *Is*, near which flows a river of the same name, which empties itself into the Euphrates. With the current of this river, particles of bitumen descend towards Babylon, by the means of which the walls were constructed.”—Herodotus, *Clio*. c. 178. Its modern name is *Hit*.

where than on the spot I visited; and the prodigious remains are conclusive evidence, that they could have belonged to no other city.

The next point for consideration is, the reason why greater remains of Babylon are not to be found? Remembering the circumstances under which this city was built, there will be no difficulty in accounting for the deficiency. It is the vast size of Babylon, and not the want of durability in its materials, that ought to excite our wonder. I have before stated, on the authority of Scripture, that the builders of Babylon substituted "bricks for stone, and slime for mortar;" a peculiarity which is mentioned by Herodotus, and various ancient authors; and I have also remarked on the ready adaptation of the wet mud on the banks of the river for the making of bricks. When we consider the sandy nature of the soil on which Babylon stood, the perishable mate-

rials of which the city was composed, and the many large cities that have been built of the ruins; when it is remembered, that workmen have been constantly employed in removing the bricks; that for two thousand years the ruins have been subject to the operations of the weather, and that in consequence of the Euphrates periodically overflowing its banks, they are for two months of every year in a state of inundation;—we ought the rather to be surprised, that such vast masses should have withstood so many concurring causes for total extinction. From these circumstances, I take it for granted, that all the ordinary buildings are crumbled into dust, and that only the remains of the largest exist.

Whoever has seen the mud habitations of an eastern city, will readily accede to this suggestion. If any further argument were wanting, the fact mentioned by Diodorus Siculus, that the greater portion of the place within the walls was ploughed up in his time,

would be, in my opinion, conclusive evidence.

After stating upon what grounds I rest my belief in the identity of these ruins, it is fair to add, that our party, in common with other travellers, have totally failed in discovering any traces of the city walls.

The divine predictions against Babylon have been so literally fulfilled in the appearance of the ruins, that I am disposed to give the fullest signification to the words of Jeremiah, that "the broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken."* We are told by Herodotus,† that Babylon was surrounded by a very wide and deep trench, with the earth of which the wall was constructed. This wall was 200 cubits or 300 feet high. When Darius took Babylon, being exasperated against the inhabitants for the resistance they had shown him, he reduced their wall from

* Jer. li. 58.

† Her. Clio. 178, 179.

its original height to 50 cubits. As his object was evidently to incapacitate the proud citizens from again opposing him, it is highly probable that he refilled the trench with the earth which had been taken from it. The work of destruction did not stop here. Xerxes, on returning from his ill-fated Grecian expedition, is said to have levelled the remaining part of the wall. This statement, however, must not be taken too literally. St. Jerome, who lived in the fourth century of the Christian era, states, that the wall was still standing; nevertheless, the reduction by Xerxes must have been very considerable. From the time of Jerome, no mention is made of Babylon for several centuries, in which interval it is most probable, that what remained of the wall must have contributed to the building of the numerous cities which have been formed out of these ruins.

March 26.—At daylight we quitted Mo-

howel, from which place the ruins of Babel commence, though they are not of a nature to merit particular notice. At eight o'clock we arrived at the first ruin of any magnitude; it is called by the natives, the Mujillebè, or "overturned." In 1616 it was visited by Pietro della Valle, who, not having examined the vast ruin on the opposite bank of the river, supposed it to be the Tower of Babel. The form of the Mujillebè may have been originally square, but, owing probably to the operation of time and the weather, it is now oblong. The sides face the cardinal points of the compass. Those to the north and south are upwards of two hundred paces* in extent; that to the east, one hundred and eighty; and that to the west, one hundred and thirty-six. The height is very irregular. To the south-east, it rises one hundred and

* I have throughout adopted Rich's measurements, in his Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon, after personally ascertaining their correctness.

forty feet. It is well worthy of observation, that in Pietro della Valle's time, the altitude of this ruin was two hundred feet, and the base measured about two thousand six hundred—a circumstance proving the remark I have before made, of the liability of the Babylonian ruins to gradual decrease; for, in the space of two hundred years, this mound has diminished sixty feet in height, and nearly five hundred in circumference. Let us suppose the decrease of the ruin, in each preceding century, to be only half of what I have stated, and the size of the original building would exceed the accounts of any ancient author.

The western side, by which we ascended, though the lowest, is the most remarkable, as it shows more distinctly the form of the structure. The mound appears to be a solid mass: it is composed of sun-dried bricks, cemented with clay-mortar: between each layer of bricks is one of reeds. The sum-

mit is traversed throughout by large channels formed by the rain. In walking, we stepped on several pieces of alabaster, and on a vitreous substance resembling glass. We saw great quantities of ornamental and other kinds of pottery. There were vast numbers of entire kiln-burnt bricks, which were all fourteen inches square, and three thick. On many were inscribed those unknown characters resembling arrow-heads, so remarkable in the ruins of Babylon and Persepolis. The freshness of the inscriptions was astonishing, appearing to have been recently stamped, instead of having stood the test of upwards of four thousand years. From the mode in which the bricks are disposed in this, and several other ruins, it is evident that, with some exceptions, the great buildings of Babylon were composed of sun-burnt bricks, and coated with bricks burnt in the furnace.

The mound was full of large holes: we entered some of them, and found them strew-

ed with the carcasses and skeletons of animals recently killed. The ordure of wild beasts was so strong, that prudence got the better of curiosity, for we had no doubt as to the savage nature of the inhabitants. Our guides, indeed, told us, that all the ruins abounded in lions, and other wild beasts; so literally has the divine prediction been fulfilled, that "wild beasts of the Desert should lie there; that their houses should be full of doleful creatures; that wild beasts of the islands should cry in their desolate houses."*

After exploring the Mujillebè, we proceeded to Hilleh. With the exception of a few huts, the town is situate on the west bank of the Euphrates. We crossed the river by a bridge of boats, like that at Bagdad. The Euphrates, at this point, is four hundred and fifty feet broad.

On producing our firman, the house of Syyud Murad, the governor of Kerbela, was

* Isaiah, chap. xiii. ver. 21, 22.

given up for our accommodation, and a janizary was sent by the governor to attend us.

Hilleh was built in the twelfth century, out of the ruins of Babylon. It is enclosed within a mud wall, of mean appearance, but the bazaar is tolerably good. If we except the few Turks who are employed in the government, the population consists entirely of either Arabs or Jews: the number of inhabitants is estimated at ten thousand. Near one of the gates of the town, we were shown the Musjid Eshams, or Mosque of the Sun. The outside resembles the tomb of Zobeide. The interior is a fine specimen of arabesque architecture: it is said to contain the tomb of Joshua; but the Mahometans reverence it as the place where Ali offered up his early prayers to his cousin, the prophet. On the summit of this mosque is a small cone, which our guides told us moved with the sun, to commemorate the event of the sun's having stood still to enable

Ali to fight the enemies of Mahomet. The account given in Scripture of a similar miracle having been performed in favour of Joshua has evidently given rise to this fable.

Hilleh is under the subjection of the Pasha of Bagdad, who lets it out to one of his own officers for the sum of 260,000 piastres. Besides this rent, the governor has to pay a stipulated sum to the Kia-hya, (lieutenant governor,) and to the principal officers of the Pashalick, all of which demands are wrung from the wretched inhabitants. The office of Cadi, a circumstance uncommon in a Turkish government, is here hereditary : the family of the present officer has held it for a long time. The town is surrounded by a number of gardens, which produce rice, dates, and grain. The soil is very productive ; but, as is natural under such an extortionate government, it is but little cultivated. If any thing could identify the modern inhabitants of Hilleh as the descendants of the ancient Ba-

bylonians, it would be their extreme profligacy, for which they are notorious even amongst their immoral neighbours.

The veranda of the house we occupied, was paved with inscribed Babylonian bricks. We amused ourselves during the day in comparing them with others we had brought from the ruins.* At first sight, many appeared exactly alike; but, on a closer examination, some letters were found to be different: this would indicate, as I should suppose, that they were not stamped from a mould, but separately.

These characters have hitherto baffled the inquiries of the learned; of some, however, at Persepolis, a Dr. Grotefund,† of Frankfurt, has given a translation. The Doctor has furnished tables for any one who may wish to attempt the task of decyphering

* I have presented one of these bricks to the Calcutta Asiatic Society.

† Vide Rich's second Memoir on Babylon, p. 48.

them. Maurice* is of opinion, that the inscriptions have reference to astronomy.

When Alexander came to Babylon, Calisthenes was informed by the Chaldæans, that their astronomical observations were recorded upon kiln-burnt bricks, "*coctilibus laterculis inscriptas*."† We brought with us from Babylon several curious cylinders, of which, numbers are found amongst the ruins. I have presented three to the British Museum, on which, as they are of such high antiquity, I hope to be excused offering a few remarks:

These cylinders differ from each other in size and material; the largest is an inch long, and the other two somewhat smaller: they are all perforated in the centre; and, from the numbers in which they are found, have probably been worn by the common people as amulets.

* Maurice on the Ruins of Babylon, p. 21.

† Simplicius on Aristotle de Cœlo, p. 123.

No. 1.



No. 2.



No. 3.



No. 1 is of agate: it describes two persons seated before an altar, each holding a small fish. One of them is a man with a beard; the other is a woman. Behind this last is another female, who is holding over her head what appears to be a palm

branch — a most ancient mark of royalty.* In nearly all the Persepolitan sculptures, the king, or chief, is similarly attended. On the altar is a fish, and above it are a star and a crescent, which would favour the opinion, that the cylinders, as well as the bricks, have some reference to astronomy. The bearded personage in this amulet, I consider to be a priest, and the female a princess, who is offering sacrifice to the large fish on the altar, probably the earliest form of the idol Dagan.

Dagan,† the first syllable of which word

* Numerous examples might be given of the high dignity which the palm branch was supposed to confer. The Egyptian god Hermes, and the goddess Isis, are both represented as holding palm-branches in their hands. The Jews hailed our Saviour as “King of Israel,” by taking branches of the palm and strewing them in his way.—John, chap. 12.

† דג, Dag et דגה, Dagah piscis interpretatur.—Selden de Diis Syris, Syntag. II. p. 188. The idol Dagan, in his subsequent form, was half man and half fish. Berosus mentions that in his time there was a representation of him at Babylon, *τηνδε ειχονα ουτου επι και νυν διαφυλασσεσθαι (εν Βαβυλωνι)*. This idol has been thought to have been an emblem of Noah.

signifies a fish, was the same as Oannes, respecting whom Eusebius* says, that his whole body was like that of a fish, and that a delineation of him was to be seen in Babylon. The stars and the half-moon may denote the precise period in which this sacrifice was performed.

The length of hair worn by the figures on this amulet, proves that such was the custom of those days, and is singular as contrasted with the shaved heads of the present day. Herodotus† says that the Babylonians wore their hair long. In the Persepolitan sculptures, and in the coins of the Sassanidæ, the figures are always described with a profusion of hair. In the Song of Solomon‡ we are told, that “his locks are bushy;” and every one remembers the hair of Absalom, which weighed “two hundred shekels after the King’s weight.”§

No. 2 is of a substance resembling glass.

* Euseb. Chron. p. 6.

† Herod. Clio, xcv.

‡ Solomon Song, v. 11.

§ 2 Sam. xiv, 26.

Two men, without clothing, appear to be contending with two beasts. Similar figures are observable in the Persepolitan bas reliefs. Those accustomed to the examination of Babylonian antiquities will easily trace several lines in the arrow-headed characters.

No. 3 is of argillaceous earth ; it represents four persons dressed in loose robes, with broad ornamental borders.

The first and the last of these amulets are curious, as they illustrate the account of Herodotus respecting the dress of the Babylonians ; that “ they have two vests, one of linen which falls to the feet, another over this, which is made of wool ; a white sash covers the whole ” *

March 27.—Early this morning we set out to visit the Tower of Babel, accompanied by our Tchouss, one of the governor of Hilleh’s janizaries, two servants, and five of our guard, all well armed and mounted. At a

* Herod, Clio, xcv.

short distance from Hilleh, we took in a reinforcement of ten horsemen, furnished us by order of the governor. A just idea may be formed of the state of the country by our being obliged to have a party of twenty armed horsemen to go a distance of six miles, though we had nothing except our arms to attract the cupidity of robbers. On our road we met a large body of the Desert Arabs, who, though more numerous than our party, offered it no molestation, but gave us the usual salutation of "Salam Aleikum." They were probably of the same tribe as our guard, otherwise it is not likely we should have escaped so well. When we arrived in the Desert, our new detachment galloped before us and threw the blunt jereed. This instrument, which is made of any heavy wood, is about a yard long, and the thickness of a mop-stick. One horseman galloping forward with loud shouts and menacing attitudes, challenged his comrades; an opponent

soon appeared ;—as these retired, two new champions started forward in the same manner. It is astonishing to see the dexterity used in this game : the object is for one party to pursue and the other to fly and try to elude being struck by the jereed : this is managed by the person pursued throwing himself completely out of the saddle, and clinging to the cantle, either by the heel or the lower part of the leg, at the moment the jereed is darted. If the jereed strikes him, he is obliged to pick it up, which he generally does, not by dismounting, but by throwing himself out of the saddle as before, till his hand touches the ground ; and if it misses him, the other picks up his own jereed, and in turn becomes the party pursued. Our guard was amusing itself in this manner, when we came within sight of a few miserable huts. From these a large body of Arab horsemen, armed with swords and long spears, rushed suddenly forth, and began shouting with all their might. Both

parties halted for a minute: a herald from each met half way, and, after a few moments' conference, gave a shout, which was immediately re-echoed on both sides. All was again in motion. The two companies struck their shovel stirrups into their horses' sides, rode at each other with equal speed, and, resuming their shout, commenced a sham fight.

Nothing could be more animated, or would have afforded a finer subject for the painter, than this group of wild men. It is difficult to conceive the effect of a large party of armed horsemen thus huddled together in the greatest apparent confusion, with drawn swords and couched lances. This was a gentle passage of arms, and not without its interest; but it not unfrequently happens that two hostile tribes meet, who then put into fierce execution the address which they acquire by this constant practice.

From Herodotus we learn that the Tower of Babel, or (what was doubtless the same) the Temple of Belus, was a stadium in length

and breadth, σταδιοῦ καὶ τὸ μῆκος καὶ τὸ εὖρος.*

This, according to Rich's computation, which allows five hundred feet to the stadium, would give a circumference of two thousand feet. The temple consisted of eight turrets rising in succession one above the other. Rennel supposes the height to be five hundred feet. The ascent was on the outside, and there was a convenient resting-place halfway up. This temple was destroyed by Xerxes. Alexander wished to rebuild it, but died before he commenced the undertaking. All that he did was to employ ten thousand soldiers for the space of two months to remove the rubbish.† The ruins of the Tower of Babel are six miles S. W. of Hilleh. At first sight, they present the appearance of a hill with a castle on the top ; the

* I have given the quotation, because I am aware that it is a disputed passage. The translating the word μῆκος "height" instead of "length," has caused much abuse of Herodotus ; but Wesseling's edition of that author's works has repaired his injured fame.—Vide Herod. Wess. p. 85. Note. † Vide Strabo and Arrian.

greater portion is covered with a light sandy soil, and it is only in ascending that the traveller discovers he is walking on a vast heap of bricks. This mound, like the Mujillebè, is oblong. The total circumference has been found to be two thousand two hundred and eighty-six feet, which gives to the ruins a much greater extent of base than to the original building. The surplus is very great, when one considers the quantity that must have been removed by the Macedonian soldiers, and how much, in the course of ages, must have been taken by the workmen employed in digging for bricks. The elevation of the mound is irregular: to the west it is one hundred and ninety-eight feet high. On the top is that which looked like a castle in the distance; it is a solid mass of kiln-burnt bricks, thirty-seven feet high, and twenty-eight broad. The bricks, which are of an excellent description, are laid in with a fine and scarcely perceptible cement. At

regular intervals, some bricks are omitted so as to leave square apertures through the mass : these may possibly have been intended to procure a free current of air, that should prevent the admission of damp into the brickwork. The summit of the mass is much broken, and the fractures are so made as to carry conviction that violence has been used to reduce it to this state.

Distinct from the pile of bricks just described, and lower down on the north face of the large mound, is another mass exactly similar. Pieces of marble, stones, and broken bricks, lie scattered over the ruin. The most curious of the fragments are several misshapen masses of brickwork, quite black, except in a few places where regular layers of kiln-burnt bricks are discernible : these have certainly been subjected to some fierce heat, as they are completely molten—a strong presumption that fire was used in the destruction of the Tower, which, in parts, resem-

bles what the Scriptures prophesied it should become, “a burnt mountain.”*

Travellers who have visited this spot, have been struck with the curious appearance of these fragments, and, having only seen the black surface, have altogether rejected the idea of their being bricks. In the denunciation respecting Babylon, fire is particularly mentioned as an agent against it. To this Jeremiah evidently alludes, when he says that it should be “as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,” on which cities, it is said, the “Lord rained brimstone and fire.”† Again, “I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him ;” and in another place, “Her high gates shall be burned with fire, and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.”

* Jeremiah, chap. li. ver. 25.

† Some of the Jewish Doctors say, “that God overturned the tower (Babel) by a terrible tempest, or burnt it by fire from heaven.”—Hewlett’s Annotations on Scripture, vol. i. p. 194.

Taking into calculation the brick mass on the top of the large mound, the ruins are two hundred and thirty-five feet high, which gives nearly half the height of the Tower in its perfect state. Rich thought he could trace four stages, or stories of this building; and the united observations of our party induce the same conviction.

Wild beasts appeared to be as numerous here as at the Mujillebè. Mr. Lamb gave up his examination, from seeing an animal crouched in one of the square apertures. I saw another in a similar situation, and the large foot-print of a lion was so fresh that the beast must have stolen away on our approach. From the summit we had a distinct view of the vast heaps which constitute all that now remains of ancient Babylon; a more complete picture of desolation could not well be imagined. The eye wandered over a barren desert, in which the ruins were nearly the only indication that it had ever

been inhabited. It was impossible to behold this scene and not to be reminded how exactly the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled, even in the appearance Babylon was doomed to present: that she should “never be inhabited;” that “the Arabian should not pitch his tent there;” that she should “become heaps;” that her cities should be “a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness!”*

In Rich’s memoir on Babylon is an account of some earthenware vessels containing human bones, similar to those seen by us on two occasions. With a view to compare them with what we had observed, we went up the river this afternoon.

Our boat was of a peculiar construction. It was in shape like a large circular basket, the sides were of willow, covered over with bitumen, the bottom was laid with reeds. It had two men with paddles, one of whom

* Jer. li. ver. 37. 43.

pulled towards him, as the other pushed from him. This sort of boat is common to the Euphrates and Tigris, and is, probably, best adapted to the strong currents common to these rivers. May not these boats be of the same kind as the "vessels of bulrushes upon the waters," alluded to by Isaiah?*

By comparing my description with that given by Herodotus of the boats used in his time, it will be seen how little their structure has altered since that remote period. The passage referred to is not long, and may be worthy attention.

"Of all that I saw in this country, next to Babylon itself, what to me appeared the greatest curiosity, were the boats. These, which are used by persons who come to the city, are of a circular form, and made of skins. They are constructed in Armenia, in the ports above Assyria, where the sides being formed of willow, are covered exter-

* Isaiah, chap. xviii, ver. 2.

nally with skins, and having no distinction of head or stern, are modelled in the shape of a shield. Lining the bottoms of these boats with reeds, they take on board their merchandize, and thus commit themselves to the stream. The principal article of their commerce is palm wine, which they carry in casks. The boats have two oars, one man to each ; one pulls to him, the other pushes from him. These boats are of very different dimensions ; some of them so large as to bear freight to the value of five thousand talents ; the smaller of them has one ass on board, the larger several. On their arrival at Babylon they dispose of all their cargo, selling the ribs of their boats, the matting, and every thing but the skins which cover them : these they lay upon their asses, and with them return to Armenia. The rapidity of the stream is too great to render their return by water practicable. This is, perhaps, the reason which induces them to make their

boats of skin rather than of wood. On their return with their asses to Armenia, they make other vessels in the manner I have before described."*

We continued our trip up the river for about a mile, but the current was so strong against us, that we abandoned our intention of going to the place proposed. Our excursion, however, proved most satisfactory, though we did not see the vessels mentioned by Rich; for, in returning to Hilleh, we found a number of the same description we had seen, and containing human bones: thus fully confirming our own observations and those of Mr. Rich.

These vessels were three quarters of a mile from the bridge, on the west bank of the river. The place appeared to have been an ancient burying-ground, encroached upon by the Euphrates.

As this mode of disposing of the dead is

* Herod. Clio. cxiv.

so much at variance with the customs of the Babylonians and ancient Persians, it appears probable that the tombs may contain the bodies of some of the Greeks who accompanied Alexander on his Eastern expedition. In marching through a country where the scarcity of wood first suggested the idea of the hanging garden, the substitution of the famous Babylonian clay for coffins seems natural and obvious.

In support of this opinion, the physician who attended General Gardane, the French ambassador to the court of Persia, told a friend of mine, that he had seen vessels of a similar description, used for the same purpose, in several parts of Greece: and the Asiatic Collections contain an account of some earthenware vessels having in them human bones, which were found in the neighbourhood of Bushire, near which place Alexander must have met his fleet under Nearchus, after his return from India.

March 28.—We left Hilleh this morning to resume our examination, and took with us a party of workmen to dig for us. The ruins on the west bank of the river commence two miles north of the town. Including the Mujillebè, they extend three miles north and south, and upwards of two miles east and west. The first heap of ruins, though of considerable extent, has a very indeterminate form, and presents only the general appearance observable throughout,—mounds channelled by the weather, and strewn with fragments of buildings. I shall, therefore, pass them without further mention, and proceed to describe those which I consider to be the site of the Hanging Gardens, and of the palace.

Diodorus says the palace was near the bridge. Strabo and Quintus Curtius state the gardens to have been near the Euphrates, whence they were supplied with water, by means of engines. All these three authors

are agreed as to their having been situated within the walls of the palace.

The entire mound comprises a square of two thousand eight hundred feet. In addition to the usual vestiges, are several broken alabaster vessels; we remarked also great quantities of varnished tiles, the colours of which were remarkably fine. According to Diodorus, the walls and towers of the palace were covered with tiles of different colours, representing a grand hunting-piece, more than four cubits in size. In this were described a great variety of wild beasts: here was to be seen Semiramis on horseback, brandishing a spear; and near her Ninus, in the act of killing a lion. The colours are said to have been laid in before the bricks were baked, *ἐνωμαῖς ἐπὶ ταῖς πλινθοῖς*.*

We have a singular confirmation of this account of Diodorus in the prophet Ezekiel,

* Diod. Sicu. Wess. Ed. vol. i. p. 121.

who, speaking of the defection of Judah, under the character of Aholibah, says, "She saw men pourtrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldæans pourtrayed with vermilion, girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look to, after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldæa."*

This mode of exterior decoration is still common throughout the East. Numerous specimens came within my own observation, in the course of the journey, particularly in the cities of Bussorah, Bagdad, and Teheraun.

Captain Hart brought me the portion of a highly varnished blue vase, to which were sticking some fragments of human bones that had undergone the action of fire. I attempted to separate them from the vessel, but they pulverized on being touched. The bricks are finer here than in any other part

* Ezek. xxiii. ver. 14, 15.

of the ruins ; their superiority is attested by the number of men we found employed in digging for them. The ruins are so perforated in consequence, that the original design is entirely lost : all that could favour any conjecture of gardens built on terraces, are two subterranean passages, which we saw at some distance from each other. The people digging for bricks say that they are of great extent, and very high in many places. We made our workmen dig at each entrance, hoping to trace a communication ; but we were unsuccessful, as they were nearly closed up with bricks and rubbish, and our men were afraid to continue their work, many people having been accidentally buried in the ruins. To judge from what we saw, there can be no doubt that both passages are of vast extent : they are lined with bricks laid in with bitumen, and covered over with large masses of stone. This is nearly the only place where stone is observable.

While we were exploring the cave, an enormous wild boar of a reddish colour started up from amongst the ruins. Our party immediately gave chase, but he eluded us. In the eagerness of pursuit, I snatched a gun from a servant and fired; luckily I missed the animal, for the shot was too small to kill him; and his instinctive revenge, it is well known, might have made me pay dearly for my temerity.

The prophecy of Isaiah, that Babylon should be inhabited by wild beasts, was fulfilled after the extinction of the Seleucidæ; for their successors, the Parthians, turned the city into a park, and stocked it with wild beasts for the purpose of hunting. Amongst these the wild boar is enumerated.*

It has been supposed that many curious trees are to be found on the site of the hanging gardens. This is not the case; there is

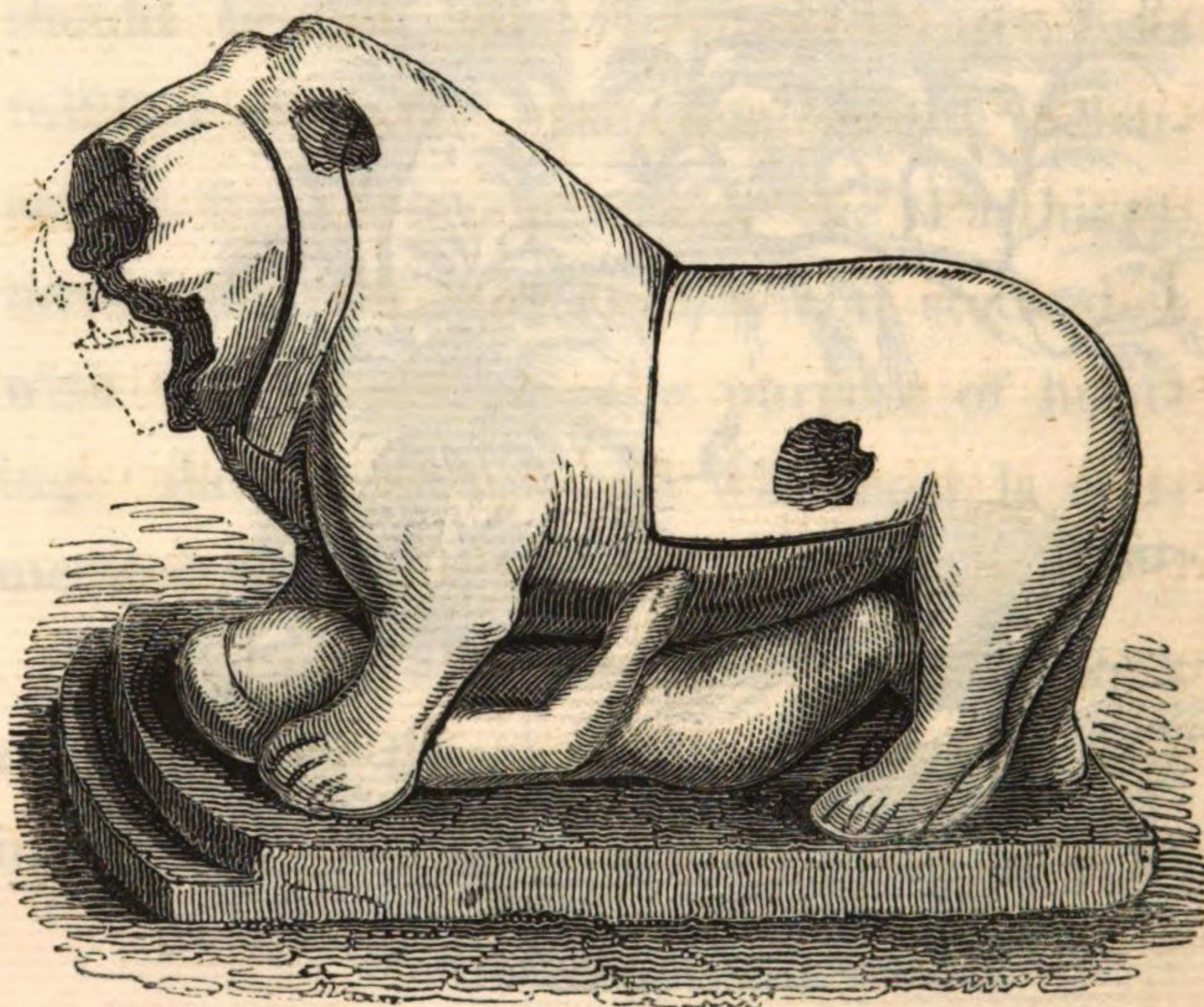
* St. Jerome.

but one, and that is in the most elevated spot. It is a kind of cedar, possibly one of the *κεδρίναι* of Diodorus. One half of the trunk is standing, and is about five feet in circumference. Though the body is decayed, the branches are still green and healthy, and droop like those of the willow. With the exception of one at Busorah, there is no tree like it throughout



Irak Arabia. The Arabs call it Athelè. Our guides said, that this tree was left in the hanging gardens for the purpose of enabling Ali to tie his horse to it after the battle of Hilleh.

Not far from this tree, we saw indications of a statue, which had been imperfectly seen by Beauchamp and Rich. We set our men to work, and in two hours found a colossal piece of sculpture, in black marble, representing a lion standing over a man. When Rich



was here, the figure was entire; but when we saw it, the head was gone. The length of the pedestal, the height of the shoulders, and the length of the statue, measured, in each of their respective parts, nine feet.

I would venture to suggest that this statue might have reference to Daniel in the lion's den, and that it formerly stood over one of the gates, either of the palace, or of the hanging gardens. It is natural to suppose that so extraordinary a miracle would have been celebrated by the Babylonians, particularly as Daniel was afterwards governor of their city.

The prophet was also governor of Susa (the Shushan of Scripture), where he frequently went in the discharge of his official duties, and at which place he died. A short time ago, Susa was visited by some French officers in the service of the Prince of Kermanshah: amongst other antiquities, they found a block of white marble covered

with Babylonian characters, having sculptured on it the figures of two men and two lions. This may also allude to the same event.

The finest specimen of Babylonian structure is a large building, called by the workmen the Kasr, or Palace. Its form is quadrangular, and it faces the cardinal points. It is composed entirely of kiln-burnt bricks of the finest description, which are laid in with a cement of the utmost tenacity. The workmen have long left this untouched, from the impossibility of detaching the bricks from the cement. As the palace is in the midst of other elevated ruins, the precise height cannot be ascertained, though it is possible that the foundation may be on a level with the plain. The walls are eight feet thick; they are rent throughout, but evidently not by the hand of man, as nothing but some violent convulsion of nature could produce the vast chasms observable in this ruin. The

freshness of the brickwork is such, that we should have had difficulty in identifying it with the ruins of Babylon, had we not found it situated in the midst of other buildings, instead of being detached from them. The solid appearance of the original structure impressed the mind the more strongly with the image of devastation that it now presents.

CHAPTER X.

Triumph of Travelling over Prejudice—Grotesque Dance
—Fire Temple—Presentation to the Pasha of Bagdad
—Feast of St. Gregory—Visit from the Officers of the
Pashalick—Instance of the Pasha's despotic Power—We
return the Visit of the Officers—The Pasha's Garden
—Musruf Effendy and his Screw-pump—First impres-
sions on visiting Bagdad—Description of the Streets
and Bazaars—Interior of a House—Dress of the Wo-
men—Liberty enjoyed by Turkish Females.

HAVING concluded our examination of the ruins, we retraced our steps towards Bagdad, and reached Mohowel, the nearest caravan-serai to Babylon, in the evening. After we had dined, our servants and the chief muleteer sat down together, and made a meal on

the provisions that were left,—an incident showing how far travelling had been able to overcome national and religious prejudices. The persons composing the party were, two Sunnis and four Shiahhs, betwixt which sects exists the most violent hatred; and, to complete the party, two Christian “Infidels” were on the present occasion welcome partakers of the same meal with the “True Believers:” of all the party, the Indian Syyud was perhaps the person who had made the greatest sacrifice of his religious scruples; for the Indian Mahometans, following the prejudices of the Gentoos, deem it a profanation to eat with others not professing exactly the same tenets as themselves, and to eat “the leavings” of another has become in India a proverbial expression of abuse. What then must have been the situation of this descendant of the Prophet, who scrupled not to eat the leavings of those who deny

the Divine mission of his great ancestor, in company with two individuals of that hated race?

March 29.—We resumed our march this morning, and passed as many pilgrims as before. We arrived at Khana Zund in the evening, where we halted for the night. A few miles from the caravanserai we observed a mound, which we thought might be the Fire Temple described by Aboo Nasir, where he told us the devils were in the habit of dancing amidst flames. Notwithstanding his denial of it now, we were convinced it was the same place; because it corresponded with the bearings we had taken on board our boat, and more particularly because he showed so fixed a determination not to go with us to the spot, begging to be excused on account of sickness,—a plea which but ill accorded with his ruddy features. Aware of his superstitious fears, we amused ourselves by pressing him to accompany us

after dark ; but he was obstinate, and we were ultimately obliged to give up the point.

As the night came on, we went frequently out to try if we could not observe any fire produced by naphtha, for which Babylonia was so famous, thinking it possible that some such production might have given rise to the tradition ; but we could see nothing to justify this conjecture.

Before we went to sleep, two of our Arab guards entertained us with a dance of the most grotesque description : one, who represented a lover, evincing his attachment by hallooing with all his might and jumping round the other, who personated a female, and continued dancing within the circle, preserving as much diffidence of demeanour as might have been expected from a fair Arab of the Desert. If strength of lungs and activity of limbs would have been claims to the hand of a fair lady, this athletic

Stentor would have proved a formidable rival.

Besides our own attendants, all the chance inmates of the caravanserai assembled to witness this dance, and, with loud expressions of applause, animated the performers to continue their exertions. The whole, indeed, formed a very interesting group; for the unsteady glare of a dying fire reflecting on the swarthy countenances of the dancers, was no bad illustration of Aboo Nasir's account of the devil's dance.

March 30.—We visited the Guebri Bena (the Temple of the Guebres) at day-light, but could not persuade Aboo Nasir to make one of the party. It is constructed of mud cemented with rushes, like the Mujillebè at Babylon. Each side faces a cardinal point; that towards the west gradually inclines to the plain. It measures thirty feet from the summit to the visible base, and is two hundred and thirty-three feet in circumference.

We saw the usual fragments in the neighbourhood. The whole ruin exhibits considerable marks of the ravages of time. It bears W. of Ctesiphon, and N. by W. of Khana Zund caravanserai. Notwithstanding the dilapidated state of this mound, I feel no difficulty in conjecturing the form of the original structure.

I suppose that, like the Babylonian ruins, it was a quadrangular building; the interior of which was composed of regular layers of mud and reeds, and, as may be deduced from the fragments around, coated with kiln-burnt bricks. From the gradual slope towards the plain to the west, on that side was the ascent to the temple; the east being the place where stood the altar on which was placed the sacred fire.

To put this supposition in a clearer light, let us remember in what the temples of the Guebres differed from those of other worshippers. The doctrine of Zoroaster was,

that there was an infinite and all-powerful Being, to whom the early Persians were taught to pay their devotions. As so simple a doctrine could not long satisfy the corrupt nature of man, the sun, as the brightest emblem, and subsequently fire, were allowed to be worshipped as symbols of the Deity. It was not, however, till the appearance of a second Zoroaster, that temples were adopted; but even then they were of the simplest structure, probably of the form I have just described. Roofs, walls, or pillars, were expressly forbidden in these edifices. To illustrate this circumstance, Xerxes destroyed the temples of the Greeks when he overran their country, because they presumed to enclose within walls Him who was the universe itself.

At eight miles from Bagdad we met a caravan of Persians, which appeared to form the suite of some woman of rank. Nine veiled females, all mounted astride on horses, were riding in a line. She who by the su-

periority of dress appeared to be the principal lady, had her horse led by an eunuch.

We arrived in Bagdad at half-past three in the afternoon, having suffered so much from the intense heat of the sun that our hands and faces were completely blistered. On our return, we found Aga Saikeis in considerable alarm for our safety, as we had returned a day later than we proposed, and during our absence a battle had been fought between the Turks and Arabs, in which the latter were victorious.

March 31.—We employed the morning in returning the visits of the European gentlemen who had called upon us: they all received us in the Turkish style, with pipes and coffee. The Chief of the Artillery introduced us to his wife, an Armenian, and his family, consisting of three daughters and one son. They were all dressed in the costume of their country. He gave us an account of the action, which had taken place on the

Moussoul road, between the Arabs and the Pasha's troops : the latter, it appeared, had lost forty men and three pieces of cannon. He appeared to be much annoyed at the result of the engagement : not so much on account of the men killed, " for they," as he said, " could easily be replaced ; nor of the guns, for there were enough of them ;" the object of his great grief was the loss of the carriages on which they stood. Observing us smile at this peculiar cause of grievance, he told us that the Pasha was so extremely parsimonious, that when the gun-carriages were worn out, he would not go to the expense of new ones ; consequently, half the guns on the ramparts were dismounted and unserviceable. As an example of the niggardly disposition of the Pasha in this particular, he told us that the British agent some time ago presented him with a handsome English chariot, which was placed in the Palace yard, and where it has remained

unemployed ever since. The only observation made by the Pasha on receiving the present was, whether the wheels could not be taken off and turned into gun-carriages.

April 2.—We went this morning to pay our respects to the Pasha of Bagdad, dressed in full uniform, and riding horses gaily caparisoned, and accompanied by a numerous mounted retinue. The Pasha's secretary sent some of his servants to attend us, and we were met at some distance from the palace by a deputation of janizaries. On entering the gates of the palace, we came into a spacious court, where the Pasha's troops were drawn up under the command of our friend the Chief of Artillery, who presented arms to us as we passed. On arriving at the gates of the second court, we dismounted: here the principal officers of the Pasha received us, and ushered us into his presence, to which we passed through two lines of janizaries, who, standing with their arms

folded, preserved an immoveable gravity. The hall of audience was fitted up in the Oriental style, and decorated with numerous small looking-glasses of a triangular form, which had a curious dazzling effect. In one corner was seated the Pasha, supported by cushions : chairs were placed for us ; and, as had been previously stipulated, we seated ourselves without taking off either our hats or shoes. The Pasha was remarkably affable and polite, and begged we would fix an early day for visiting one of his gardens, distant a few miles from Bagdad. We took our leave, after going through the usual routine of coffee, sweetmeats, &c.

Davoud (David) Pasha is a Georgian by birth, and was formerly a slave to Syyud Pasha ; but, having at an early age abjured Christianity, he assumed the character of a Mahometan devotee, and seating himself at the palace gate, acquired so large a sum by begging, that he was sufficiently rich to be-

come a candidate for the purchase of the Pashalick, and sent in his proposals to the Grand Signior. His application was answered in the usual way, by forwarding an order for the execution of the ruling Pasha; which being put into immediate effect, the mendicant slave stepped quietly into the place of his old master. He had no sooner possessed himself of the Pashalick, than he threw off the mask of ascetic, and appeared in his true colours. Convinced that a situation which was gained by blood, "by blood must be maintained," he has been as reckless of life as any of his predecessors; and I have been informed, that no less than fifteen hundred persons have fallen victims to his ambition or rapacity. He is a good-humoured looking man, apparently between forty and fifty years of age, and of very prepossessing manners. During the interview, I tried to discover in his fine countenance any lines of remorse for such a load of crime; but I

looked in vain ;—and, remembering Byron's descriptive lines on Ali Pasha, found it not less difficult

——— “ to trace

The deeds which lurk beneath, and stain him with disgrace.”

Previous to leaving the palace, we called upon the Kia hya, (lieutenant-governor,) whom we found seated in his divan, and surrounded by Georgian slaves.

April 3.—This being the feast of St. Gregory, the patron Saint of Armenia, we went with the agent to the Armenian church, attended by the usual state retinue. The place was very crowded: the women were in a separate apartment from the men, having been kept out of sight in compliment to us. We occupied seats close to the altar. During the service, frankincense was frequently presented to us. The service was chaunted by priests, and a choir of boys; the ceremonies were similar to those in use amongst the

Greeks, but more numerous. In one of them the principal priest held up his hands, and, after a variety of ceremonies, placed them, with the palms closed together, before the second, who, having kissed them, in like manner offered his hands to be kissed by a third; and in this manner the sanctified kiss went through the whole congregation. The service was indolently and unimpressively performed. One of the boys assisting in the choir got a sound box on the ear for inattention, which immediately set the rest of them laughing. Aga Saikeis remained for a short time, and then left the church in the middle of the ceremony.

April 4.—Some of the principal officers of the government, amongst whom were the Chief of the Janizaries, the secretary, and the Musruf Effendy, the treasurer, paid us a visit this morning, to acknowledge the Pasha's sense of our civility in waiting upon him: at least, that was the ostensible, though

not the actual reason of their visit ; for, after sitting with us for some time, they spoke privately to Mr. Lamb, who had formerly practised medicine, and laid before him a proposal from the Pasha to make him his physician. I forget the terms of the offer ; but, of a definite sum, part was to be paid by the Pasha himself, and the remainder was to be made up by each of his officers being forced to employ Mr. Lamb in his professional capacity. My fellow-traveller replied, that though he could not, under any circumstances, avail himself of the Pasha's flattering offer, he had no objection to give advice gratuitously during our stay in Bagdad. The high estimation in which European doctors are held in the East, is a proof how deficient the Asiatics are in this most important science ; but, in spite of their present ignorance, I doubt whether they are worse informed now than in the earlier periods of their history. We are told by Herodotus,

that even at Babylon, in its most prosperous times, the custom was to carry a sick person into a public square, for the purpose of being questioned by the passers-by ; and if any one happened to have been once suffering from a similar complaint, he would detail to the invalid by what means his own cure had been effected.

We had a practical illustration, this afternoon, of the Pasha's despotic will and power. Having occasion to make some purchases in the bazaar, we were informed that the Pasha had depreciated the coin one-half the current price !

April 5.—The following morning (5th) we returned the calls of our Turkish acquaintances. Our first visit was to the Yunitchery Assy (chief of the janizaries), whose dress was remarkable from its resemblance to an English judge's gown, being a loose scarlet robe with a broad collar of ermine.

This officer enjoys a high reputation in Bagdad, and has always proved himself friendly to the British interests, in gratitude (as he told us) for his life having once been saved by the intercession of our agent, Mr. Rich, after he had been condemned to death by Syyud Pasha.

On leaving the chief of the janizaries, we went to the secretary, who was in his haram when we arrived. Amongst the servants in attendance, a woman was pointed out to me, who, dressed as an eunuch, formed one of the *suite*; this being a privilege occasionally granted to women, when (as in the present instance) age and appearance are a sufficient guarantee for their good behaviour. The secretary soon made his appearance, bringing with him a tolerably correct Arab map of the Grand Signior's dominions, of which he seemed to have no very indistinct idea. While we were looking at this specimen of

Arab science, Meerza* Nasir, a Persian of rank, came in, having just arrived on a mission from the prince governor of Kermanshah relative to the safe conduct of the body of His Highness's father, the late governor of that province,† to Meshed Ali, the proposed place of its interment. As soon as we were introduced to this gentleman, he overwhelmed us with protestations of kindness. Understanding we were about to proceed to Kermanshah, he promised to write to all his friends there, to insure us a good reception.

From having the map before us, the conversation naturally turned on the subject of our travels. It was amusing to observe the surprize our auditors expressed on hearing that we travelled for our own gratification only. Meerza Nasir, in particular, asked

* The word Meerza *before* a name signifies secretary ; *after* it, prince.

† Mohummud Ali Meerza, eldest son of the King of Persia, whom I shall hereafter have occasion to mention, died two years previous to the date of this notice.

how we, as officers of the King, could find funds to defray our expenses; and if any of us should die on the journey, what would become of any property we might leave. We told him that the King paid us just the same as if we were actually on his duty; and that on the death of either of us, the next of kin would succeed to the property, even if his Majesty wished it otherwise. This was so contrary to the custom of Persia, where every casualty goes in favour of the existing power, that he interrupted us with an incredulous expression of *ajieeb!* (*wonderful!*) evidently thinking we were indulging in a traveller's privilege, notwithstanding the Persian proverb, that "an Englishman never tells a lie."

April 6.—We went this morning, according to our appointment, to a garden of the Pasha, distant about four miles from the city, and reached it after an hour's pleasant ride along the banks of the Tigris.

The Pasha in this, as in every other instance, seemed desirous to show us every attention ; for we found assembled at the appointed place the Lieutenant-Governor and the principal persons of the Pashalick—an honour, which we were given to understand, was seldom, if ever, shown to private individuals. We entered a small oblong room, where all these personages were seated, smoking their pipes with true Turkish solemnity.

Through the centre of this room ran a stream of water, of which I was first made aware by stepping my foot into it, in my anxiety to do the honours correctly. We sate cross-legged ; and remained so long in this painful position, that we were completely tired of our honours, when luckily the Musruf Effendy (treasurer) called us out to look at an awkward kind of pump, worked by one horse, on the principle of the Archimedes' screw, for letting the water of the Tigris into the Pasha's garden.

The Musruf looked with peculiar complacency on this machine, and claimed the honour of the invention ; although one of his detractors whispered in my ear that he was indebted for it to a Persian. Be this as it may, the Musruf is unquestionably a man deservedly celebrated for every species of expediency ; in proof of which may be mentioned an admirable plan he has lately invented, in his own department of treasurer, for settling with the troops, whose pay is four piastres, or two shillings English, a month. In lieu of this, he has given them a certain quantity of tobacco, worth about half the sum. So valuable a servant could not but be highly acceptable to his master ; accordingly, there are few persons in such high favour, as is the Musruf Effendy with the Pasha of Bagdad.

Attracted by an arbour formed of vine-trees, we bent our steps towards it for the advantage of its shade, as we were now suffering

from the meridian rays of an Eastern sun ; but, alas ! the approach to it was completely inundated, owing to the active mechanism of the Musruf's screw-pump.

This mode of watering a garden, however inconsistent with our ideas of English neatness, has probably been found to be most efficient, as it is the common mode in use both on the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris, and has been so from the most ancient period of history. Herodotus mentions that the Assyrians used hydraulic machines for irrigating their lands. With the knowledge of this circumstance, it is somewhat difficult to reconcile the accounts given in the Arabian Nights of the delightful walks taken by various heroes and heroines in these same gardens of Bagdad ; for this irrigation, having been a daily process, must have rendered the paths somewhat too muddy, one might think, for the luxurious promenade of Eastern beauty.

Being now about to take our departure from this city, a few general remarks may not be unacceptable.

A traveller coming by water from Bussorah is likely to be much struck with Bagdad on his first arrival. Having been for some time past accustomed to see nothing but a desert—there being no cultivation on that side of the city by which he arrives—he does not observe any change that would warn him of his approach to a populous city. He continues winding up the Tigris through all its numerous headlands, when this once renowned city of gardens bursts suddenly on his sight. Its first view justifies the idea that he is approaching the residence of the renowned Caliph, Haroun Alraschid, in the height of its splendour; a crowd of early associations rushes across his mind, and seems to reduce to reality scenes which, from boyish recollections, are so blended with magic and fairy lore, that he may for a moment imagine

himself arrived at the City of the Enchanters.

Bagdad is surrounded by a battlemented wall; the part towards the palace, as was the case in ancient Babylon, is ornamented with glazed tiles of various colours. The graceful minarets, and the beautifully shaped domes of the mosques, are sure to attract his eye. One or two of these are gaudily decorated with glazed tiles of blue, white, and yellow, which, formed into a mosaic of flowers, reflect the rays of the sun: the variegated foliage of the trees of these numerous gardens,* which most probably have given the name to the city, serve as a beautiful back-ground to the picture. Thus far the traveller is allowed to indulge his reverie; but on entering the walls, his vision is dispelled.

The walls are of mud: the streets, which are scarcely wide enough to allow two per-

* Bag, or more properly *Baugh*, (the first syllable of the word *Baughdad*), signifies *garden*.

sons to pass, are so empty, that he could almost fancy the inhabitants had died of the plague: he looks upwards—two dead walls meet his eyes; he now enters the bazaar, and finds that he has no reason to complain of want of population; a mass of dirty wretches render his road almost impassable; with some difficulty he jostles through a succession of narrow cloistered passages, traversing each other at right angles; the light, which is admitted by holes a foot in diameter from the top, gives to the sallow features of the crowd below a truly consumptive appearance, agreeing well with the close, hot, fulsome smell of bad ventilation. The traveller, by this time, has seen sufficient to cure him of the dreams of earlier life; and, on arriving at his destination, he makes a woful comparison between the reality of the scenes and the picture imagination had drawn. Such, or nearly such, was the impression first made by my arrival in Bagdad.

The interior of a house is much more comfortable than its outward appearance would lead you to expect. The residence of Aga Saikais is not a bad specimen of this; it consists of a succession of square courts surrounded by galleries, each forming a distinct habitation. In the outer court is a room, or rather a recess, forming three sides of a square, and open towards the front; this, in Persian, is called the *Dufter Khoneh* (office), where the ordinary business of the day is transacted: the second court is somewhat larger, but of a similar structure, in which is also a recess; this is the (*Dewan Khoneh*) audience-room.* From the galleries are partitioned off several rooms, some of which we occupied, having windows opening to the court, formed of small diamond-shaped panes of glass of every colour, and disposed in various fantastic shapes: the in-

* *Dewan*, pronounced in England *Divan*.

terior of these chambers is decorated in the same style ; the ceiling is composed of a kind of trellice-work describing flowers of different colours. The walls are formed into small arched recesses, of the Arabesque order, and are gilded in a gaudy manner. The number of these courts is increased according to the size of the house ; the innermost always comprising the haram, or women's apartments. The few windows that look towards the street, are covered with a frame of lattice-work. During the warm weather, the inhabitants sleep on bedsteads placed on the roofs, which are flat, and surrounded by parapet walls. As some of the roofs are more elevated than others, those occupying the highest can observe the women who dwell in the lower apartments ; but a stranger will think well before he indulges his curiosity, as a Turk would feel himself justified in sending a ball through the head of his prying neighbour.

There is every reason to believe that Eastern houses are of the same form, and applied to the same purposes as formerly. From a variety of texts of Scripture, the roof appears to have been always inhabited. The expression of Isaiah, that "thou art wholly gone up to the house tops,"* evidently refers to this circumstance. It was from "the roof of the king's house" that David first saw Bathsheba.† This he could easily do, as, of course, the royal palace was more elevated than the surrounding habitations. Samuel communed with Saul on the top of the house, and the next morning called him up to the same place, to send him away.‡

In my note upon Bussorah, I have mentioned, that at an Armenian feast, a large party were assembled on the terrace to celebrate the betrothment of our host. In the same manner, three thousand Philistines met

* Isaiah xxii. ver. 1. † 2 Sam. xi. 2.

‡ 1 Sam. ix. ver. 25 and 26.

on the roof of the house, on the day of a “great sacrifice unto Dagon, their god,” and to rejoice “that Samson had been delivered into their hands.”

The parapet wall round these terraces, was ordained by the Jewish law to prevent any one from falling off: “When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.”*

The lattice on the windows, is also mentioned in Holy Writ. In Solomon’s Song, the bride says “he looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice.”†

There is hardly any variety in the dress of the Bagdad females. A blue check robe, enveloping the whole person, has been selected by the Turks, probably from the homeliness of its colour, at least likely to attract attention; a thick horse-hair veil, through which

* Deut. xxii. 8.

† Sol. Song. ii. 9.

it is impossible to discern the features of the wearer, extends to the chest: a lady thus habited is allowed to go abroad, attended by a female servant, whose dress differs from that of her mistress only in the coarser texture of the materials. Numbers of these females may be seen in an evening outside the walls of the city: some of them are mounted on mules, when a pair of long yellow boots are added to the dress; others on foot, proceeding towards the garden to fulfil an assignation with their lovers. In our evening rides we frequently passed some of these females, who, if they were alone, and a Mussulman not in sight, would lift up their veils, and show such a disposition to become better acquainted, that if we had been inclined for this species of adventure, our addresses would doubtless have met with a favourable reception.

The gardens commence within half a mile of the walls of the city, and extend four or

five miles along the water's edge. They are separated from each other by walls ; a small door opens from each garden towards the river, which often serves to admit some female, who, gliding softly in a small boat, enters the garden by this means, while her lover comes in from the opposite side : here the precautionary measures of dress, that were intended to ensure fidelity, prove useful only in preventing discovery. A woman thus disguised can escape without much fear of detection ; the uniformity of the dress prevents any one from identifying her figure, and no man, whatever may be his suspicions, will dare to lift the veil of a woman in public. In Constantinople, Englishmen who have engaged in this description of adventure, have disappeared, and never been heard of afterwards. In Bagdad there does not appear to be so much danger ; we heard of some of our own countrymen having escaped, even after detection, though, in some instances,

the female, and some of the principal abettors of the intrigue have fallen victims to their imprudence.

From these circumstances it will appear that Turkish women have more liberty than is usually supposed, and though by the customs of the East they are deprived of that respect and admiration of the men, which are the birthright of Englishwomen, they have, perhaps, more power of indulging their licentious inclinations, and with less fear of detection than our ladies, who like our monarch, have a legitimate though limited sway.

CHAPTER XI.

Buildings in the time of Haroun Alraschid—A House—Mosque—Disregard of the Turks for Antiquities—Preparations for departure—Advice to Travellers—Roguery of the British Agent—Mr. Wolff, a Missionary—Extortion of the Servants of Aga Saikeis—We leave Bagdad—Gold-stick bearer—Benec-Sad—Ruined state of the Town—Aboo Nasir throwing the Jereed—Bacoubah—Devastation of the Army of Mohumud Ali Meerza—Alarm of Robbers—Aboo Nasir's Request—The Silver-stick Bearer and Aboo Nasir take leave.

DURING our stay in Bagdad, we were very anxious to observe any customs in use amongst the modern inhabitants, with which we might associate our recollections of their ancestors, as recorded in the Arabian Nights; but Bagdad is no longer the Court of the

Caliphs. The former capital of the Eastern empire, has dwindled into the seat of government of a remote province. The deputy of the Caliph's successor occupies the seat once filled by commanders of the faithful; and although in the decline of a great city there must be a smaller field for the delineation of character, than in the days of its prosperity, the customs of the present inhabitants have such an affinity to the accounts handed down to us of the days of splendour, as to bear ample testimony to the fidelity of that admirable picture of Oriental life.

In our search for illustrations of the Arabian Nights, we were not unmindful of buildings in the time of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, the detail of whose midnight pranks have so amused our earlier life. Though there are few remains of this merry monarch, these few, unsatisfactory as

they were to our craving curiosity, were visited by us with a grateful respect for his memory, proportionate to the pleasure we had derived from the perusal of his exploits. A house situate on the banks of the Tigris was shown to us as having once been the residence of Haroun. There is nothing in its actual appearance to attract notice, though it is remarkable for the judicious situation in which it is built. The far-famed Tigris washes its walls, and from its lattices is a fine view of the surrounding scenery.

Another memento of the Caliph is a mosque in a dilapidated state, which bears marks of having once been beautiful and elegant; it is nearly the highest building in the city. Captain Hart attempted to make a sketch of it, but was prevented by the importunate curiosity of the Turks, who had gathered round us to discover the objects of our attention.

Here it may not be irrelevant to offer a

few remarks on that disposition so observable in Eastern nations to allow the works of antiquity to decay. The people who do not look backward to their ancestors, will never look forward to posterity. The Turk, careless and indolent, dozes through his existence, unmindful of the past, regardless of the future. With us, the actions of our forefathers are associated with our own. The motives which stimulate us to present exertion are the recollection of our predecessors, and the hope of benefiting our posterity. The Turk, from the frail hold by which he clings to life, merely regards the moment of present enjoyment. To-morrow he may be dead, or he may be a beggar. To-day, is his existence. He knows that like the mighty Davoud, the slave may become the three-tailed bashaw, but he also knows that the same sum which purchased the head of his predecessor, may be given for his own. He exercises power while he may,

in extortion and oppression. Prodigal of the life of others, equally careless of his own, he yields when his turn comes, with the indifference of a predestinarian, and respectfully submits his neck to the bowstring, whenever "the vicar of the holy prophet" dooms him to destruction.

April 8.—For some reasons, that we were unable to divine, Aga Saikais threw every obstacle in the way of our departure. Whenever we made inquiries respecting any opportunity of joining a party proceeding to Kermanshah, our next halting place, he always evaded giving us an answer, till the caravan in question had proceeded on its journey.

Impatient at this protracted delay, and being suspicious that we were again to become the innocent instruments of some deceitful project, we determined to follow the plan we had adopted at Bussorah, of forming our own caravan, and travelling independent of others. For this purpose, we

purchased tents; Mr. Hart and Mr. Lamb had a small one a-piece, and Mr. Hamilton and myself a larger one between us. We were assisted in our arrangements by Gaspar Khan, a wealthy merchant, who engaged for us twenty-four mules, to carry our servants and baggage. The chief muleteer gave us a written agreement, by which he was bound to go to Kermanshah within a given time, or to remain on the road as many days as we required. We had each two servants, and two saddle horses; we hired two tent-pitchers for the whole party, and the descendant of Mahomet still continued to act as cook. The Pasha hearing of our projected departure, sent a janizary to escort us to the Persian frontier, with a firman, exempting us from all tolls and exactions whatever. Aboo Nasir begged us to allow him to accompany us the two first stages, for the sake of old acquaintance, a proposal to which we willingly acceded.

From the moment that Aga Saikeis saw these preparations, his spirits entirely forsook him. He frequently tried to rally, but in vain ; and there can be little doubt that by our departure, we defeated some favourite plan he had formed for his aggrandizement ; as from the time we commenced our preparations for the journey, we observed him in close conference with his confidential secretary, an Armenian of the establishment, whose sympathetic features reflected the woe-begone countenance of his principal.

Should any traveller follow our route, he need not employ so large an equipage as that imposed upon us by Aga Saikeis. If he travel alone, he will only have occasion for a saddle horse for his own riding, and two mules, one of which, more lightly laden than the other, will also carry his servant. With so small an equipage, however, it will be advisable for him to join a caravan ; indeed, at all events, he had better do so, as there is con-

siderable danger in passing the frontier, on account of the numerous predatory hordes that infest the mountains; and, though we did not come in actual contact with these robbers, we have good cause to remember them. The traveller is recommended not to put himself to any expense in the purchase of portmanteaus, as the articles of the country are infinitely cheaper and better adapted to the mule loads. A small breakfast-canteen is indispensable. With regard to equipment, and an estimate of expenses, Lieutenant Colonel Johnson's journey through Persia, to London, gives very excellent advice to travellers. It is the best itinerary that has been published of a Persian tour, and affords a fair valuation of expenses, though, perhaps, occasionally underrated: at least, we were unable to make such good bargains. Our route was not the same as Colonel Johnson's, but his remarks are equally applicable to both lines of march.

I cannot close these observations without strongly recommending any future traveller visiting Bagdad, to avoid the house of Aga Saikis : if his objects be curiosity, economy, or expedition, he will in all probability enjoy as little liberty to pursue his observation as ourselves ; the good cheer of which he may partake, though not charged in a bill, will draw from his pocket, by indirect means, an ample remuneration. If it should suit the views of the agent, so many obstacles will be thrown in the way of his departure, that nothing but the most decisive conduct will prevent his detention. It was not till some time after our departure from Bagdad, that we were fully convinced of this Armenian's rogueries ; each succeeding day brought to light some fresh instance of his extortion in proof of which, candour obliges me to relate a circumstance, which, for the reputation of our party, ought to be kept secret, the misfortunes being of that description

which would obtain us no commiseration from our sporting countrymen. In short, Aga Saikeis, with some very few exceptions, took in the whole of our party in the sale of horses.

As I could not presume to impeach the judgment of my fellow travellers, in a point on which all Englishmen are so punctilious, the names of the sufferers must not be mentioned; but out of our stud, one horse wanted an eye; a second, a pair of hind legs; a third, recommended as likely to suit a timid gentleman, ran away with him every day to the amusement of the rest of the party; and of the two horses I bought, one died at Teheran, and the other was very well sold at Tabriz for a sum equivalent to two pounds sterling.

Having thus pointed out the shoals of which the traveller is to steer clear, it is but fair to give a few directions for the course he ought to pursue. He is recom-

mended to hire apartments for himself, and to employ no servant but his own. If he should require information connected either with arrangements for his journey, or with objects worthy of his curiosity, he is recommended to the Chief of the Artillery, who will be proud to afford him every assistance in his power, and to whose good offices our party feel themselves much indebted.

While we were at breakfast this morning, Mr. Wolff, a Missionary, came in, having just arrived from Aleppo after a long and arduous journey across the Desert. Of this, his appearance bore ample testimony, as his complexion, naturally fair, had turned to a copper colour from the scorching influence of the sun. He appeared to have encountered various difficulties and dangers, and seemed so overjoyed at again meeting with European faces, that he could scarce restrain his satisfaction within bounds. He gave us an interesting account of his journey

through Mesopotamia, and of the various perils he had encountered on his road.

At a short distance from Merdan he met with the Yezedees, an extraordinary sect, who entertain a sort of pious regard for the Devil. On one occasion being seated between two men, he asked one of them, who was a Christian, of what persuasion the other was? the person alluded to, replied, that he belonged to a particular tribe, who neither bowed the head, nor bent the knee in prayer. Mr. Wolff then asked him if he was not one of the worshippers of the Devil? He replied, "We worship nothing, but we never pronounce that name which you have just uttered." We staid so short a time with Mr. Wolff, that we were unable to gain much information respecting this extraordinary people, who, he told us, believed that the Devil was a fallen angel, but that in the course of time he would again be received into divine favour.

We were much interested in our new acquaintance, who, in the course of conversation, evinced an inexhaustible fund of anecdote, and showed such enthusiasm in the laborious and perilous office in which he is employed, that, though we may not agree with him in the efficacy of his mission, few can help admiring his unaffected piety, and the sincerity of his religious zeal.

Mr. Wolff is a native of Germany, and was in early life of the Jewish persuasion, from which he was converted to Catholicism, and became a member of the "propaganda fide." Living at Rome, he observed so many practices which he deemed inconsistent with his notions of Christianity, that he abjured popery, and published such an anathema against his Holiness himself, that his friends, in regard for his safety, hurried him out of the Holy City. His mission, when we saw him, was from the London Bible Society, to inquire into the religious state

of the Jews in the East ; and the result of his observations have since appeared in a periodical work entitled the "Jewish Expositor."

It was his intention to have sent his journal home by us ; but as our arrangements were made for departing in the course of the day, and we found that his baggage might be detained for some time, we were reluctantly compelled to forego the pleasure of its perusal.

We had various visitors this morning, who came either on business with the agent, on a visit to Mr. Wolff, or to take leave of us. During the day, the conversation was carried on in no less than ten languages. Aga Saikis had occasion at different times to speak Turkish, Arabic, Armenian, and Persian ; Mr. Wolff spoke Italian, German, and Dutch ; and our party spoke French to the Chief of Artillery, Hindostan to our servants, and English among ourselves.

The rest of the day was less pleasantly occupied. No sooner had we retired to our rooms, than we were besieged by the whole household of Aga Saikis, who collectively and individually put in their claims to be remunerated for some alleged services. In this emergency, we sought their master to protect us from imposition. As usual, when our interests required his presence, he had some convenient occupation that called him out of the way; finding our condition hopeless, we acted as our countrymen always do in like cases—we paid the money, not failing, when we found Aga Saikis, to make a statement of our grievances. Instead of assisting us, he replied with his favourite theory, that we were charged more than usually high for every thing, because “the English name was so great in Bagdad.”

After satisfying the demands of these cormorants, we sent forward our servants and baggage, and at five in the evening, had the

satisfaction of finding ourselves outside the walls of Bagdad. On our road to Kermanshah, we were accompanied by Aga Saikeis, and a large party of native gentlemen for some distance out of the city, and submitted to their presence with patience, knowing that it was the last time we should have the honour of their society, of which, to say the truth, we began to be a little tired.

We had not proceeded more than two miles on our journey, when we were overtaken by the silver-stick bearer, who, seeming to think his presence necessary, said, he was ordered to accompany us to Bacoubah, two stages distant; we told him we had no farther occasion for his services, but the hopes of more fees induced him to disregard our hint, and to take his usual station in our retinue.

We pursued our course in a N. N. E. direction. At eight, we passed some mounds. The road for a considerable distance was strewn with broken bricks; we saw a num-

ber of old water-courses. We traversed for three miles what appeared to be the old bed of a river. These remains indicate a former state of culture, of which they are the only vestiges.

With the exception of a few patches of verdure in some hollow places, where the rain has lodged, the whole extent from the foot of the wall of Bagdad is a barren waste, without a blade of vegetation of any description. At ten P. M. we were at Benee Sad ; our tents were pitched at the north side of the caravanserai, on the edge of a swamp, over which the wind blew piercingly cold. Adjoining the caravanserai is a small village, from which we procured sheep and fowls. We arrived, very hungry, on our ground but had nothing ready to eat. In our journey to Babylon, our Bagdad host laid in an ample store of cold provisions, and bread sufficient for us till our return. On the present occasion of our final departure,

he had not thought any attention of this kind necessary, the ends of his policy, regarding us, having been accomplished.

The advanced guard of the army under Mohummud Ali Meerza, the late Prince of Kermanshah, marched as far as this place, on their road to Bagdad. They have left striking proofs of their visit in the ruinous and desolate state of the town, which they destroyed.

April 9.—We left Benee Sad at seven A. M. After three hours march we crossed the bed of the river Nar, which tradition states to have been the ancient bed of the Tigris, one branch of which falls into the sea.

Our day's march was not without its amusement. Aboo Nasir having indulged in a stirrup cup, was more than usually merry ; riding before us, with jereed in hand, he dared us to the contest. We each of us grasped a jereed, and in turns pursued him, but his legs, which were the only sober members of

his body, stuck so close to the saddle, that we could neither upset him, nor touch him with the jereed, as he always managed to elude the blow, at the moment we expected to see him prostrate on the ground.

At eleven we arrived at the river Diala, the Delas or Pasitrigis of ancient history : we crossed it on a large platform ferry, that carried over the cattle with the load on their backs.

Near the ferry was a garden, in which we remained till our party was ready to proceed ; here we drank coffee, smoked our pipes, and ate sweet limes, which we found truly refreshing, as the heat was very oppressive. That curious optical delusion, called by the Persians the Saharaub,* was so strong that we were deceived into a belief that we were close to the Diala long before we reached it.

* Literally, " water of the desert."

From the ferry we rode about two miles along the banks of the river, and arrived at Bacoubah, our second day's march. This appears to have been a very considerable place, but has been laid almost entirely in ruins by the army of Coords, under the command of Mohumud Ali Meerza, late Prince Governor of Kermanshah, whose head quarters had been established here for some time. The cholera morbus breaking out among them caused their speedy return to Kermanshah, where the Prince soon after died.

The time he wasted at this station saved the Pashalick; had he marched immediately to Bagdad, it is the general opinion that he would have obtained possession of it, so great was the terror his former successes had occasioned.

Two or three attempts were made to-day to frighten us into a belief of robbers, and to urge the necessity of a guard of twelve men. In the evening we were informed that three

fine horses had been carried off the night before, from the very spot where we were encamped. Aboo Nasir upon hearing this volunteered to keep watch, and sent to us for a bottle of brandy to keep him awake; whether owing to his vigilance, or not, certainly no robbers came.

April 10.—As Aboo Nasir was to leave us this stage, he came to us in the morning and asked us to give him a written character, which he might show to any of our countrymen pursuing the same route. As soon as he had obtained the document, he said to us, “I can’t think of asking you for any liquor, I therefore, positively, shall not accept more than five bottles of spirits.” Such an appeal it was impossible to resist; so we gave him the five bottles, and he left the tent, his drunken eyes gleaming with anticipated enjoyment.

We were setting off on the journey, when, as we had premised, it was intimated that a

present would be very acceptable to the silver stick bearer; but we were so disgusted at this additional attempt at extortion, by one we had treated so well, that we unanimously resisted his demand, advising him to go for payment to him who had sent him on so fruitless an errand. As we were about to depart, Aboo Nasir, drunk as usual, came rolling in his saddle to bid us good-bye; his jolly scarlet face being humorously contrasted with the serious disappointed demeanour of his companion of the silver stick.

CHAPTER XII.

Ruins of Artemita—Historical Notice of Shehreban—
Ruins of Apollonia—Crossing the Diala—Ancient Tradition—The Hamerine or Carduchian Mountains.

WE started at three p. m. that we might have time, before dark, to examine ruins which lay on one side of the road, two hours' journey from hence. Our road was N. E., over grass plains highly capable of cultivation, with numerous encampments of Illyauts, through two of which we passed, and were treated by the wanderers with the greatest attention and respect.

Seven miles E. of Bacoubah we came upon ruins, which I consider to be those of the ancient city of Artemita, the favourite

residence of Chosroes, King of Persia, the rival of the Emperor Heraclius. The first was a square mound of bricks facing the cardinal points, resembling in form the Gabri Bina on the road to Babylon. It was called by our guides *Hud Mootsir*, and is probably the site of some temple in the suburbs of the city. A mile beyond this temple commence the ruins themselves, which, from the regularity of the mounds, appear to have been built with much taste and judgment: a succession of longitudinal mounds, bearing N. and S., and traversed by others E. and W., show the regularity with which the streets must have been formed. In the western extremity of these ruins, in a situation that would have constituted the principal street, is a mound higher than the rest, which we suppose to have formed the royal residence. Before it is a grass plain, about as large as Lincoln's Inn Square, which I shall call

the park or garden of the sovereign : of this, the circumstance that the grass grows in every place but where it is impeded by the foundation of buildings, is a sufficient indication. Immediately before the supposed palace, there are several other square spaces covered with grass, and may probably have once been the gardens of the city. The whole is surrounded by mounds, which mark the foundations of the outer walls ; and circular bastions may be traced at regular distances : even the vacant spaces, occasioned by the entrance gates, are very apparent ; many of the bricks are fourteen inches square, of the same appearance and dimensions as those at Babylon. We saw here great quantities of broken pottery : Mr. Hamilton found part of an enamelled vessel, on which was the figure of a head encircled with a wreath. We were informed, that after a shower of rain, the Arabs were in the habit of finding

amulets, and numerous coins of gold, silver, and copper. In the short space of half an hour, Mr. Hart picked up twenty-one copper coins: on one of these we could distinctly trace the head of a male figure on one side, and that of a female on the other. This would favour the conjecture of a residence of Chosroes, many of whose coins were stamped on one side with his own head, and on the reverse with that of his queen, the fair Sira or Shereen. The Arabs called this place Kurustur, but could give us no farther information respecting it. We regretted not having been previously informed that these ruins were so well worthy attention, that we might have encamped in the vicinity, and devoted a day to their examination.

D'Anville* places Artemita near a town called Descara; and Kinnier† considers it

* D'Anville Mém. de l'Académie des Inscriptions, tom. xxxii, pp. 268, 571.

† Kinnier's Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire.

the same as Kisra Shereen, a ruined city in the Hamerine Mountains, five days' journey hence.

As some explanation is necessary for differing from two such respectable authorities, it may be mentioned, that our party, after carefully examining the place mentioned by D'Anville, could find no traces of buildings whatever. As the learned antiquary never visited this country, and formed his opinion from geographical deduction, I shall consider the absence of ruins a sufficient reason for rejecting his opinion; and state my objections against that of Mr. Kinnier.

Gibbon* says, "In the space of twenty-four years, he (Chosroes) was deterred by superstition or resentment from approaching the gates of Ctesiphon; and his favourite residence, Artemita, or Destagerd, was situate beyond the Tigris, about sixty miles to the north of the capital."

* Gibbon, vol. viii. chap. xlvi.

It is well known that the Persian monarchs were accustomed to pass their summer months in the mountains, for the benefit of the cool air, and during the winter to reside in the plains.*

Strabo† informs us, that on account of the mildness of the climate, Ctesiphon was the winter residence of the Parthian kings: it is, therefore, highly improbable that Destagerda should have been in so elevated a situation as Kisra Shereen; besides, that city, instead of sixty, is nearly a hundred miles north of Ctesiphon. Isidorus of Charax, and Strabo,‡ both speak of Artemita as a great and populous city. D'Herbelot gives an account of its former splendour, and Theophanes of its subsequent ruin.

In the year 627 the Greek Emperor Heraclius took Artemita, and in revenge for the numerous calamities that had been inflicted

* Strabo, lib. xi. p. 522.

† Lib. xvi. p. 743.

‡ Ib. p. 744.

by Chosroes on the Greek provinces, destroyed with fire all the valuables that the army could not carry away. The renowned Chosroes escaped through a hole in the wall, and sought refuge in the hut of a neighbouring peasant.

From the destruction of Artemita may be dated, not only the overthrow of Chosroes, but the extinction of the whole race of Guebres. A very few years after, the mighty Mahomet appeared, and involved Greeks and Persians in one common ruin.

On leaving the ruins of Artemita, we followed the course of a canal for about three miles. We met with several oval earthen vessels on its banks, and many remains of buildings. We then passed over a rich plain, with numerous water-courses for irrigation; the country was well cultivated. The road was mostly flooded, and in many parts very difficult to pass.

We saw the fires of Illyaut camps in every

direction, but met with none of the plunderers, which we had been taught to expect.

We reached Shehreban at eleven o'clock P. M., and found it almost entirely deserted. It is a place of considerable extent. We wandered through the desolate streets some time, without finding any house with inhabitants, till we came to a caravanserai, where we met a man who told us that all the inhabitants had left the place, which had been sacked and ruined by the Coords.

We pitched our tents a quarter of a mile from the town; and remained the following day at Shehreban, to enable us to examine some ruins in the neighbourhood.

April 11.—In the morning, Mr. Hart and myself mounted our horses, and took with us a guide. About three miles to the N. of Shehreban, we came to a spot bearing the usual indications of ruined cities in the East.

The most remarkable of these was a square space of half a mile, enclosed in a wall: the sides to the N. and E. are to be traced; towards the S. and W. the wall is in many places thirty feet high. Three hundred yards to the E. side, is a high abrupt mound of sun-burnt bricks, strewed as usual with broken tiles, fragments of ornamented pottery, &c. We could gain nothing satisfactory from our guide, of the traditions respecting this place: he called it Uske Bagdad (Ancient Bagdad), and said that it was the ruin of a city built by Chosroes, to whom all doubtful remains of ancient buildings are attributed in this country.

According to D'Anville, this spot is the site of the ancient Apollonia, a town which gave the name of Apolloniatis to the surrounding district. It was probably coeval with Seleucia on the banks of the Tigris, and built by Seleucus, who doubtless gave it the name, to commemorate his

pretended descent from Apollo.* In the early part of the reign of Antiochus the Great, Molo, the Satrap of Media, presuming on the youth of the king, led an army against him, and rendered himself master of Apolloniatis; and after various successes, retired with his army into the city of Apollonia, to which place he was pursued by Antiochus, and being betrayed by his followers, killed himself in despair.

From these ruins, we proceeded to an extraordinary-looking building, which formed a long and solid mass. The bricks, which are fourteen inches square, are connected together by a hard and beautiful cement, composed of lime-stone and alabaster. This building, generally speaking, is in high pre-

* Respecting the divine origin of Seleucus we have these words in Justin:—"Laudice cùm nupta esset Antiocho, claro inter Philippi duces viro, visa est sibi per quietem ex concubitu Apollinis concepisse."

This place is mentioned in Ptolemy, lib. vi., cap. 1. Polybius, lib. 5.

servation. To the eastward, at regular distances from each other, protrude sixteen well-formed bastions; twelve of them are entire, two in rather a ruined state, and two with the bases only visible. The W. side is a flat wall, the brickwork of which is in most places very perfect: corresponding with each bastion, is a regular ascent from the opposite side, and a kind of arch across. In the wall, between each bastion, are three loop-holes, which one would suppose were for the admittance of air to a subterranean passage, but its appearance impressed us with the idea that the whole is a solid substance. The building measures from the summit of the bastion to its visible base, twenty-eight feet, the semicircumference is one hundred feet, and the space between each bastion fifty-eight feet. The Arabs call this place the Zindan, or prison, and, with their usual love for the marvellous, tell you that in it are a number of cells, inhabited by *genii*,

who take off the heads of every one who may be unfortunate enough to enter this enchanted habitation. If, as its name implies, it was formerly a prison, the loss of head might occur to the luckless inmate without the aid of supernatural agency, and some such circumstance has probably given rise to the tradition.

In the evening, we visited Shehreban, or rather its ruins, as there was scarcely one entire house remaining. A winding stream of water, occasioned by a cut from the Diala, traverses nearly every house. This stream has been occasionally embanked with masonry, of which many portions remain that appear ancient, and may have been built during the time of the former city. There are also numerous bridges of bricks, forming communications with the different streets, but, apparently, not older than the modern town.

No remains of ancient buildings exist, and

the present town bids fair to add its heap of ashes to its predecessor. It was for some time in the hands of the Persians. The works they have left here, and at the other places we have passed, give abundant proofs of their expertness in spoliation. The spectacle it presents is truly wretched. The roofs of most of the houses are fallen in; the wood having been probably used for fuel.

This town was not many months back one of the most populous and thriving in the Pashalick of Bagdad; now the whole population consists of about three families.

The mosque, which is very large, has been spared by these marauders, probably from a religious feeling. The same inducement has made them leave the caravanserai untouched, for the use of their countrymen on a pilgrimage to the tomb of their saint. Whatever may be their motives, the effect of these three buildings in preservation, only serves to com-

plete the picture of desolation, by the contrast they bear with the rest of the city.

Before we returned to our tents, we examined the fortifications and outer works. Some of these are almost level with the ground. Those that remain standing, everywhere pierced with cannon shot, have left ample traces of its destructive powers; here the action must have been desperate; the point of attack being on the E. side of the city, it must have been necessary for the besiegers to have escaladed the garden-walls, after having carried the outworks. We could distinctly trace the several breaches that had been made.

April 12.—We left Shehrebán early in the morning. We sent forward our baggage and servants to Khizil Rubaut, distant eighteen miles. After an hour's ride, we diverged from our road two miles to the N. W. to see a place where the enamoured Khosro is reported to have built a palace for the fair

Shereen, situate on the right bank of the Diala. The country was covered with verdure, chiefly wild barley and oats, and watered with numerous rills. From a distance, we thought we could distinctly trace the outline of an extensive building. On our nearer approach, we perceived that a piece of rock of peculiar form had caused this delusion ; an hour and a half brought us to the Diala, at its embouchure from the hills. The whole of this spot showed marks rather of the commencement of some undertaking, than the remains of a finished building. It is possible that Khosro might have here been engaged in constructing an edifice, when the approach of the Emperor Heraclius, obliged him to make so precipitate a retreat.

On the left bank of the Diala, we observed what had the appearance of a large unfinished flight of steps, composed of masses of stone four feet in length, and one and a

half in depth and thickness ; this extended nearly to the water's edge, and is all we met with to indicate the site of a palace.

We were ferried across this classical Diala, on a small raft, called a *kelluck*, composed of inflated sheep skins, supporting a platform of reeds, which had been prepared on purpose for us. The raft was managed by two men, and though one of them had lost his right arm from the elbow, he appeared to be equally expert with his companion. The stream is about a hundred yards wide, and very rapid : they conducted the raft with paddles of the most primitive description, formed also of reeds : notwithstanding the fragile texture of the platform, which one of our party fell through, on entering upon it, we went and returned without accident ; we landed at the place they call the palace of Shereen, close to the river side.

Instead of the large building which ap-

peared at a distance, we found a perpendicular rock, with some excavations, apparently the stations of ascetics. In one of them is the figure of a man rudely traced on the rock, with some marks like hieroglyphics near it. The largest cave is about fourteen feet square, and vaulted in the roof; the rock is a mass of soft reddish sandstone, resting on a stratum of large oyster shells, and bedded in clay. On the top of this rock, are many parts scarped for the foundation of buildings, and a small portion of a wall remaining. To the N. E. of this scarped part, and considerably higher, are two large heaps of rounded pebbles of limestone, apparently an original deposit.

The view from this eminence was very fine, contrasted with the scenery we had just left. The Diala could be traced some distance, winding among the hills, and to a considerable extent over the plain we had

traversed, which it fertilizes. The numerous water-courses we have passed in our journey from Bagdad, have been supplied from its stream, which at one time they must have almost absorbed.—We were rather astonished to hear our Arabs relate the well known tradition of Herodotus, that in consequence of one of the horses dedicated to the sun having been lost in this river, Cyrus vowed he would make it so contemptible a stream, that a lady should be able to pass over it without wetting her tunick.

On regaining the road, we arrived at the lowest range of the Hamerine Mountains: having so long been accustomed to traverse a dead flat, we were much gratified at being relieved from the usual monotony of our march, though the change was only from desert plains to barren hills.

This chain of mountains, which formerly separated the empires of Assyria and Media,

was called Mount Zagros, and distinctly marking the limits of these once splendid rivals, seemed to form a kind of neutral barrier between them. The chain, commencing in Armenia, and extending to the Persian Gulf, may still be considered as fixing the boundaries of the same countries, distinguished in modern language as Arabian and Persian Irak.

It will doubtless be remembered, that the mountains of Kurdistan have, from time immemorial, been inhabited by wandering tribes, who, though formerly in the immediate vicinity of Media and Assyria, led, unawed by their civilized neighbours, a lawless, predatory life. This people, who, beyond a doubt, formed one of the tribes of Ishmael, are mentioned as the Carduchi by Xenophon, who had good reason to remember them, from the reception they gave him, and the ten thousand Greeks, after the memorable battle of Canaxa. In the more modern appellation of

Coords, they have, during a lapse of ages, been always observed to adhere to the predatory habits of their progenitors, whenever their turbulent spirit brought them forward in the page of history. The Emperor Saladin, himself a Coord, from his contest with our forefathers in the chivalrous days of the Crusades, has left behind him a name that must be familiar to every one.

CHAPTER XIII.

Ruin at Baradan—Gaur the City of Magicians—Khanaki
—Our Janizary—Calor, a Tribe of Banditti—Annoy-
ances of the Journey—The Shurgee or Siroc Wind—
Ruins of Kisra Shereen—We are visited by Robbers—
Dangerous Adventure.

WE continued our march for about five miles over a succession of eminences, with rounded flattened tops, composed of limestone shingles. The road was very rugged, and mostly over a succession of deep narrow ruts formed by the passage of cattle. On arriving at the summit of this mountain, we came in sight of an extensive plain ; and, at what appeared the distance of two miles, we saw the caravanserai of Khizil Rubaut. The weather being intensely hot, we comforted ourselves

with the hope of soon reaching our destination; but we were wofully disappointed in finding, that instead of two, we had to traverse a tract of nine miles. The plain which we now entered, was rich, and for the most part well cultivated. After a march of three hours we arrived at Khizil Rubaut, completely worn out with the heat and closeness of the atmosphere.

Our tents were pitched to the north of the town. Khizil Rubaut, in common with its neighbours, has suffered from the vindictive spirits of its Coordish enemies. A body of the Pasha's troops were stationed here, and gave to it a less desolate appearance than the other town through which we passed.

The valley abounds in remains of ancient buildings, and proves how populous this country must have been in times of old. To the south-west of Khizil Rubaut are some extensive ruins, possibly the site of the ancient Celonæ, a town said to be situated near

Mount Zagros, through which the army of Xerxes marched on its road from Susa to Critalis in Cappadocia, the general rendezvous of that monarch preparatory to his intended invasion of Greece.

At two hours' journey, near a small village called Baradan, is a large mound. Three quarters of a mile to the east-north-east, were the ruins of the ancient City of Gaur, called, in the Arabian Nights, the City of Enchanters. Three miles to the north-west are the ruins of another ancient town, said to be of very great extent.

We were so much fatigued with the heat of our march, and our visit to the excavations, that we felt no inclination to undertake any distant excursion; we therefore confined our examination to some old water-mills about a mile from our tents, to which we walked in the evening. The channel supplying water was broken down and dry.

Respecting the machinery, we could only judge by the disposition of the masonry, that the water had been supplied from a height in the manner of vertical wheels with buckets. A small Martello-shaped tower is attached to each, with a spiral staircase to the top, which has probably been constructed to defend the works. I am the more inclined to this opinion from having seen the same sort of towers near Bussorah, to protect travellers from the Wahhabbees, and at Muscat, where a number were regularly fortified for the purpose of defending the stream which supplied the whole town with water.

April 13.—We halted to-day, to examine some of the ruins in the neighbourhood. Mr. Lamb and I visited Baradan, two hours distance from Khizil Rubaut. We took with us our Janizary, and a guide, and proceeded in a S. W. direction. Two miles from our tents we crossed the Diala on a *kelluck*.

The stream is as broad and as rapid here as at the place where we went over yesterday : we were obliged to make our horses swim over. From the Diala, we followed the course of a canal which served to irrigate the plain. In an hour and a half we found ourselves at Baradan, which, in common with other villages, has suffered from the inroads of the Coordish army. A mile and a half before we reached Baradan, we found the road strewn with broken bricks and small mounds, the remains of buildings.

To the S. W. of the village, is a mound little inferior to the Tower of Babel. It consists of a raised platform two hundred yards square, and thirty feet high. From this mass rises a quadrangular tower, ninety yards long, fifty yards wide, and eighty feet high. The whole consists of earth mixed with rounded pebbles ; a portion to the N. E. which has recently fallen down, exhibits its structure of successive layers.

From the quantity of broken bricks, it has evidently, like the Babylonian ruins, been coated with them. The centre of the mound is much injured; huge ravines being formed on three sides of it by the rain. We found numerous fragments of broken pottery, &c. Near the top of the upper mass, we saw a vessel containing the bones of animals.

The appearance of this mound corresponds with the accounts given by Strabo and Pausanias of some Fire-temples, which, on account of their being situated on large mounds of earth, they called *λοφοι μαροειδεις* from their resemblance to a woman's breast. Diodorus states that Semiramis erected a number of them in Assyria. From the reverence in which these places of worship were held, and from their capability of defence, they became repositories of treasure. Strabo mentions that in this country* (Assyria) there

* Strabo, lib. 16. p. 1080.

was one called Azara, (a name signifying treasure) which was plundered by the Parthians of ten thousand talents.

During the time that we were occupied in these ruins, a crowd of villagers collected about us, and smoked their pipes with us; and though our appearance attracted their curiosity, they behaved to us with great respect. This was not a little heightened by our worthy janizary, who we overheard telling them that Mr. Lamb was the King of England's principal physician, and that I was a general in the royal army. From the manner in which this officer has conducted himself towards us, he doubtless believes us to be the high personages he has represented; and we strongly suspect, that we are indebted to Aga Saikeis for these unsolicited titles, which always occasioned us much inconvenience, the usual companion of greatness; and, as is often the case with high honours, were attended with some danger.

We returned by the same road that we came, and reached our tents at five in the evening. Messrs. Hart and Hamilton had been, in the mean time, to the ruins of Gaur, the city of Magicians of the Arabian Nights, which lies to the N. E. of Khizil Rubaut, at the distance of about a mile.

April 14.—We left Khizil Rubaut at four in the morning. Our road lying nearly N. E. was chiefly over a succession of sandstone hills, similar to those we had already passed. As we were now approaching the frontier, our chief muleteer was so well acquainted with the customs of the road, as to know that more than usual caution was necessary. Whenever he found us either straggling to the rear, or going too much in advance, he rode up to us and requested that we would keep close to the baggage, telling us much danger was to be apprehended from robbers. By his good generalship we marched in a more disciplined manner than

ordinary, and reached Khanaki at nine in the morning. We crossed the Diala, which washes the northern walls of the town, over a handsome bridge, built by the Persians to facilitate their pilgrimage to Meshed Ali. About a mile to the N. we pitched our tents in the neighbourhood of some gardens.

Khanaki, which is of reputed antiquity, defines the frontier of the Pashalick of Bagdad, and has met with a fate natural to its unfortunate position between two rival powers. About two years ago it was taken by Mohummud Ali Meerza, and must at that time have had its share of the calamities of war. Upon the retreat of the Prince into Kermanshah, he left behind him a garrison of three hundred Coords, who were surprised by the Pasha of Bagdad, and, without exception, put to the sword. This catastrophe occurred only six months back.

The works of devastation here are even more marked than at any place we have yet

seen. The fruit-trees in the gardens appeared to have been recently cut down; the village is one entire scene of desolation. The caravanserai, which is large and in good repair, stands to the W. side, and when we arrived was crowded with travellers. The few inhabitants, who have come after the general slaughter which so recently took place, occupy some huts adjoining; but we could procure nothing from them, and were supplied with some bread and eggs by the wandering tribes.

As the power of the Pasha could now no longer avail us, we took leave of our janizary. He was well satisfied with the gratuity we made him, and prayed earnestly for our safety and prosperity.

The conduct of this officer has been unobtrusive, respectful, and attentive; three extraordinary qualities in a Turk. He has executed with much diligence the duties of his situation, and we have never heard that he has

been guilty of any acts of oppression while with us, although the firman of the Pasha would have afforded him ample opportunities, had he been so disposed. In taking leave of him, we can not help feeling regret, that as a janizary he will be obliged to recur to violence, so necessary for the support of his existence, which is at the same time so inconsistent with the apparent mildness of his character.

April 15.—At half past four in the morning we left Khanaki. In the preceding marches, we had been in the habit of going forward without waiting for the lading of the mules ; but the chief muleteer so strongly urged the necessity of our keeping close together, that we all started at the same time in the morning. This order of march was so tedious, from the slow rate at which we journeyed, that we did not attend so strictly to his instructions as we ought.

As the day broke, we found ourselves as-

ending a range of hills, similar to those of yesterday, but considerably improved in appearance. Our present ascent was rather more rugged: the mountains, instead of having their usual aspect of bleak rock, were covered with a bright verdure, which afforded some relief to the wearied eye.

This rocky region, divided into a variety of ravines, through which the road traverses with many windings, is in every respect well calculated for the haunts of robbers; its numerous ambushed covers afford so many points from which the plunderers can mark, unobserved, the traveller's progress, while the ravines secure an easy retreat to those acquainted with the intricacy of their recesses.

Soon after day-break, as Mr. Lamb and I were riding together, some hundred yards in advance of our party, three men on horseback came suddenly into the road from among the rocks, at one of the narrow passes of the mountain, fifty paces in advance of us, and

seemed to regard us with no small degree of attention. He who appeared to be the Chief of the party, was mounted on a black horse. These continued to march a short distance before us for several miles, frequently slackening their pace till we got near them, and then moving on more briskly.

When we arrived near the end of our stage, they turned back, and allowed us to pass, giving the usual traveller's salutation of "Peace!" a phrase little in consonance with their hostile intentions. After we had passed them some distance, they struck into the mountains, and were soon out of sight.

Our conjectures respecting them, as it afterwards appeared, were not without foundation. On our arrival at Kermanshah, a young Arab chieftain informed us that twenty Coords of the Calor tribe (one of the most numerous and powerful of Coordistan) had followed us from Khanaki, for the express purpose of plundering our party, and of mur-

dering us if we made any resistance ; of this party, twelve were on horseback, and eight on foot, armed with matchlocks. The chief, who he told us rode a black horse, exactly coincided, in description, with the person we had seen. The Arab said they had been watching night and day for a favourable opportunity to put their plan in execution : but always finding us so much on our guard, had never thought fit to make the attempt, and had been ultimately obliged to abandon their purpose, on arriving at the mountain pass of Pac-Takht, where a military force was stationed.

Their chief inducement to attack us, was the intelligence they had received from Bagdad, that our party consisted of an ambassador and his suite, travelling with a large treasure—the danger we were led into by this honour, is another of the obligations we owe to Aga Sakeis.

They were deterred from attempting their

purpose, by the dread of the European officers at Kermanshah revenging our deaths ; and their extravagant notions of European prowess and skill in arms ; which (notwithstanding their numbers) made them consider the result of an attack too doubtful to hazard, even for the abundant harvest they expected to reap.

We were disposed to doubt the accuracy of our informant's intelligence, but he fully satisfied us, by entering into so minute a detail of the circumstances of our march, from the time this party had waylaid us, that had we not been assured he himself was at Kermanshah during this time, we should have believed him to have been present with the party.

Our curiosity being strongly excited to learn the sources of his intelligence, he at last told us, that his authority was the leader of the band himself, his most intimate friend, but that he could not reveal his name, as a betrayal of confidence would cost him his life.

From several circumstances that escaped him, it was proved beyond doubt, that his informant was our morning visitor on the black horse. It appeared, also, that this band was under the protection of one of the principal courtiers of Kermanshah, who shared in its booty, and shielded it, through his influence, in that corrupt government.

We owe this information to a feeling of gratitude on the part of the young chieftain, for some important services rendered to his family by the late Mr. Rich. He should not, he said, have revealed the circumstances confided to him, if the party had not intended to make another attempt on our leaving Kermanshah ; and it was to put us on our guard, that he had made the friendly communication. It was near this place that Sir Robert Ker Porter was attacked on his journey to Bagdad.

The scenery, on approaching Kisra Sheeren, is very picturesque. The road leads

along the banks of a branch of the Diala, which runs through a narrow valley at the foot of a steep hill. A back-ground of mountains rises in gradual succession one above the other, the highest of which are covered with snow, but the absence of wood detracts from the beauty of the landscape in this country.

We suffered more in this march than in any of the preceding. The heat was intolerable : myriads of small gnats hovered around, and either got into our eyes, or feasted on our fevered blood.

We turned abruptly round a projecting point of the hill, and came suddenly in sight of the caravanserai of Kisra Shereen, which, from this distance, had the appearance of a strong fortification.

The ground in the neighbourhood of the caravanserai is so covered with stones, that we had great difficulty in finding a place to encamp on. We at length discovered a small

level spot, of extent just sufficient for our party. It was situate on the banks of the river, which, in consequence of the melting of the snows in the mountains, was swollen to a considerable size, and, forcing its way through large disjointed masses of rocks, rushed past us with roaring impetuosity.

This small space was surrounded on three sides by a semicircular range of hills, at the top of which were the ruins of the ancient city of Kisra Shereen.

While pitching our tents, the master of the caravanserai came, attended by some country people, and intreated us not to encamp outside, as the greatest danger was to be apprehended from robbers, which he stated were very numerous; adding, that as Franks of distinction, he was responsible for our safety, but could not guarantee it, if we persevered in our present intention.

To prove his assertion, he pointed to the neighbouring village, which was completely

deserted on account of robbers; the few remaining inhabitants being lodged in the caravanserai.

Being too much accustomed to the miserable accommodation of a caravanserai, we rejected his advice: he then offered to furnish a guard of twelve men, which he told us would be absolutely necessary for our protection. This we also refused, saying that we were able to protect ourselves, having found, on all other occasions, that we could dispense with the proffered assistance.

After some time we got into tolerable order, but were all so harassed with our march, that, notwithstanding the beauty of the scenery, we lost both our spirits and temper. The caterer of the week delayed our breakfast a full hour beyond the usual time, and exposed the milk and butter to the sun, till the one was sour, and the other rancid. We worked ourselves up to a state of

wretched irritability, that was little consonant with the good humour and harmony that usually prevailed among us.

April 15.—As we had determined to resist the expense of an additional guard, deeming it at the time an imposition, our servants kept watch last night, and passed the time in smoking, singing, and playing the *dumbuck*, a species of guitar. At intervals, during the night, they discharged their fire-arms, to show the robbers they were on the alert. This appeared to have effect, as they did not think fit to honour us with a visit, and morning dawned without an adventure to grace our tale.

For the last three days, we have all been affected by the influence of the S. E. wind. Of the party, I have, perhaps, been the greatest sufferer. The effects produced by this wind, resemble, in many respects, the symptoms of a low fever; violent head-ache, pains in the bones, loss of appetite, nervous

irritability, and a general lassitude which renders any kind of exertion painful.

Last night, I retired to rest with all these distressing symptoms, but on awaking in the morning, I felt so restored, and my spirits were so buoyant, that I needed not to be informed of the wind's having shifted to another quarter.

The S. E. wind is called in Arabic and Persian, the Shurgee, and, by a natural analogy in Oriental languages, is the same word as the Siroc, from the effects of which I have often suffered in the Mediterranean.

The natives of the Ionian Islands are so well acquainted with the unpleasant sensations produced by the Siroc, that when they perceive its approach, they immediately shut every door and window, and while it lasts, never go into the streets except on urgent business ; while our countrymen, disdaining to avail themselves of the experience of the natives, and, believing air to be necessary to

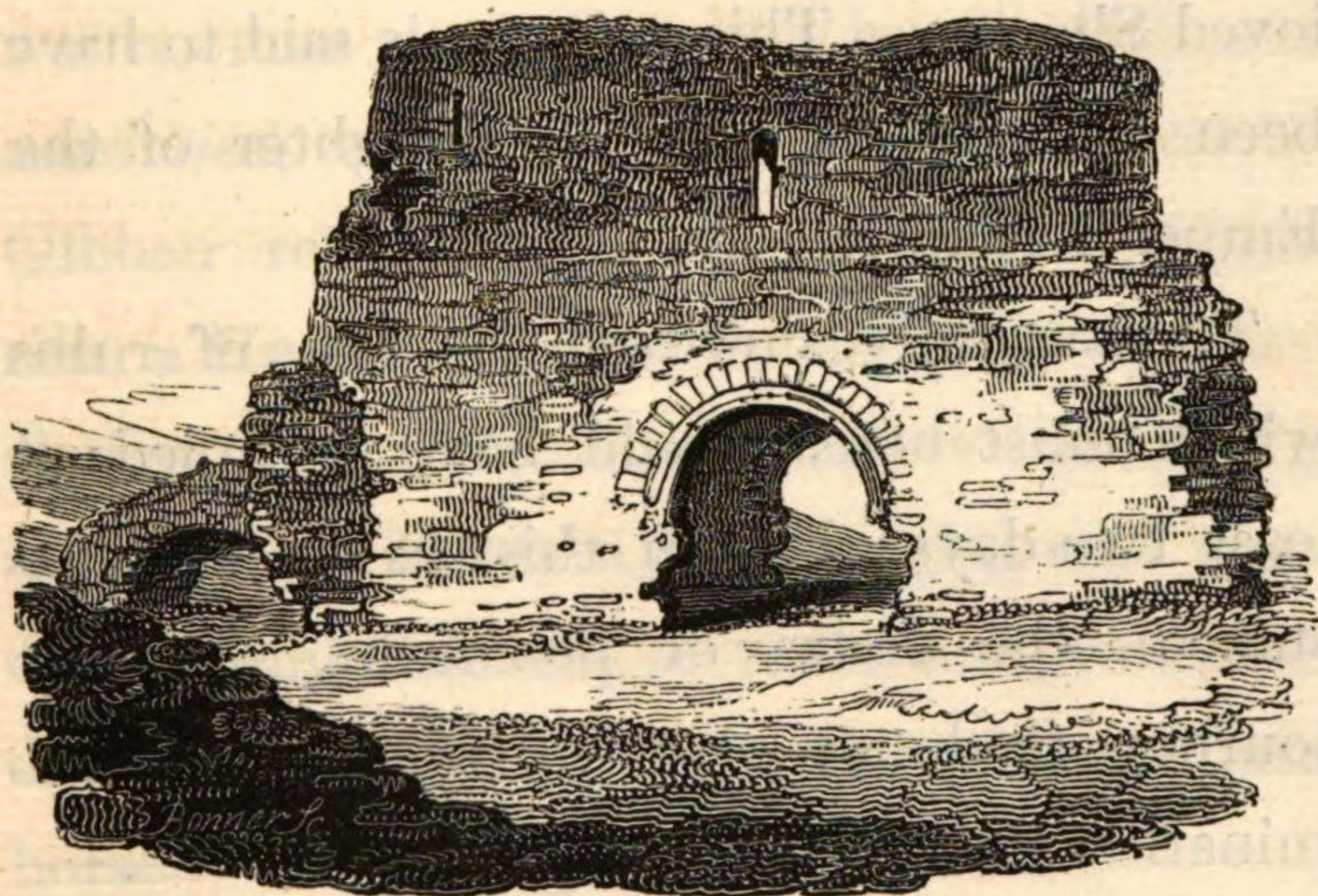
health, leave unclosed every aperture that can admit the pestilential blast.

At sunrise, we visited the ruins of Kisra Shereen. The first of these is a fort situated on the edge of a plateau, in a position to command the road, which passes along the valley by two of its faces. It is built of large quadrangular pieces of compact limestone, with conical towers placed at small intervals. The towers are all vaulted, and vaulted communications lead to them along the walls. The E. and N. sides of the fort stand on the verge of the plateau. In the W. and S. faces, there is a deep ditch, excavated in the rock. The walls of the fort are levelled to the plain of the interior, as are also the buildings, which can be distinctly traced on the outside. The walls, which are from fifteen to forty feet high, are of so massive a structure, and composed of such durable materials, that they are likely to remain in their present condition for many

ages. A quarter of a mile from the fort are extensive enclosures, surrounded by a wall about fifteen feet high, composed of massive square stones.

We passed over a level flat, which the natives call the garden. In the centre, is the ruin of an extensive palace of very massive structure : the walls stand from about ten to twenty feet, sufficient to mark its plan. To the north of the garden, is an oblong enclosure similar to a stadium. We were shown the baths, and a large mass of building, with vaulted roofs, called the bazaar of Kisra. We went hence to a large square building, the hall of audience : the walls are entire ; but the roof, which appears to have been vaulted, has fallen in. This building has four entrances, facing the cardinal points ; whence the sovereign is said to have issued his commands to the four quarters of the globe. These entrances have arches of a parabolic form.

Our guides brought us to a hill, on which, they said, was formerly the Nukurah Khanah, and pointed to one similar on the opposite side of the valley, to which they gave a similar denomination. The remains of buildings could be traced in these two places. The accompanying sketch will convey an idea of the usual appearance of the buildings.



We were informed, that about two years and a half ago an European had made an accurate survey of all the buildings, and had

taken with him a stone covered with inscriptions. Who the European was, we have yet to learn: at the time, we thought it might have been Sir Robert Porter, who visited these ruins some time since; but we have met with that gentleman, who saw no stone such as described by our guide.

The city, as its name implies, was built by Kisra, or Chosroes, in honour of his beloved Shereen. This princess is said to have been a Christian, and the daughter of the Emperor Maurice.

To have fully surveyed the mass of ruins which exist here, would have occupied at least two days; but in this, as in other instances, the desire of proceeding on our journey made us give less time to our examination than they deserved.

April 16.—We suffered so much from heat in our last day's march, that we were determined for the future to travel by night. We separated soon after dusk, to take a little repose preparatory to our journey; but, as

we thought it possible robbers might attack us this evening, we posted our sentinels as before. Our horses were secured by each foot being fastened by a hair rope to an iron staple which was fixed in the ground. A similar mode of picketing horses is mentioned in Scripture, in the account which the four lepers give of their visit to the deserted camp of the Syrians, that "there was no man there, but the horses *tied*, and asses *tied*, and the tents as they were."* Gibbon relates, that the success of Galerius, a Roman General, in the reign of Diocletian, was to be attributed to his having attacked the Persians in the night, who were consequently unable to resist him, from the difficulty they had in unshackling their horses.†

For the better securing our baggage, we placed it within a small space in the centre of our little camp. Having made fast the

* 2 Kings, vii. 10.

† Gibbon, vol. 2. chap. xii. p. 146.

doors of the tents, we were about to sleep, when we heard a shot fired, which was quickly followed by two others. On inquiry, we found the robbers had descended the hill, and had commenced unloosing the cords by which our horses' feet were fastened to the ground; but, being fired upon, had fled. Shortly after, another set of men (for the same could scarcely have got round in the time) came to the opposite side, made a similar attempt, and met with a similar reception. This seemed to satisfy them, for we saw no more of them: though, as we afterwards heard, they formed a part of the Calor banditti.

After these interruptions, we again laid ourselves down to rest, when an incident occurred, which was nearly proving of a tragical nature, and will serve to show the state of watchfulness in which we were.

It had been our custom every night, previous to sleeping, to examine our arms, and

then to place our swords beside us, and our pistols under our pillows.

I had been asleep about half an hour, when I was awoke by a rustling in the tent : upon looking to the place whence the noise proceeded, I could distinctly perceive the figure of a man forcing himself through one of the divisions. With my mind fully occupied on the late attack, I immediately cocked my pistols ; and, with the muzzle presented to the dark figure which appeared to be creeping along, I begged that Mr. Hamilton, to prevent accidents, would come close to me before I fired. By great good fortune he called out, and I discovered that *he* was the supposed robber, who, having gone to speak to Mr. Lamb, had been unable to open the door on his return, and had forced his way in the manner described.

CHAPTER XIV.

March by Moonlight—Our Chief Muleteer—Pool Zohaub
—Stupendous Scenery—Curious Custom of Illyaut
Women—Ancient Sculpture—Ascent of the Zagri Pilæ
—Magnificent Scenery—Pa-ee Takht—Suridage—
Vexatious Delay of the Muleteer—Town of Kurund—
Visit from the Governor.

WE commenced our march this evening as the moon was majestically rising from behind the mountains. The night was delightfully cool, and we all felt the difference between our present situation and when suffering from the heat of a burning sun, augmented by the reflection from the surrounding rocks: nor do I think we were losers by the change, even on the score of scenery. Daylight is necessary to develope the beauties of a land-

scape, marked by a variety of tints ; but in such as we here passed, the uniform colour of the hills, and the want of wood, soon palled on the eye. On the other hand, the bright beams of an Eastern moon striking upon the projecting points of the mountains, and presenting to our view their tops silvered by the snow, while the recesses were thrown into the deepest shade, left fancy to raise up images which reality could not identify.

We had frequent occasion to admire the activity and skilful arrangement of our intelligent muleteer. Mounted on a small high-bred Arab, he galloped over the most broken ground with the same fearless security, as if he was scouring his native plains, constantly passing from front to rear, admonishing the indolent and encouraging the active, himself setting an example which seemed to inspire the others with emulation. When we approached any narrow pass where robbers were accustomed to take post, he

galloped on several hundred yards to reconnoitre ; thus forming an advance picket to afford us time to put ourselves on our guard.

Indefatigable as was his attention to the duties of his situation, he was equally mindful to those of his religion. Daily as the sun was about to rise, he would gallop forward with the rapidity of an arrow, throw himself from his horse, which grazed unrestrained by his side, and falling on his knees would finish his devotion about the time we came up.

April 17.—The weather continued temperate till a short time before dawn, when we came to a low swampy plain, and felt a chilly rawness in the air that was very unpleasant.

We reached Pool Zohaub, or Serpool, at sunrise, crossed the river over a well-built bridge, and pitched our tents on a rich plain, about half a mile to the south-east of the village, near an immense wall of limestone, which divides this from another fertile valley,

about two miles wide, extending to the bottom of the higher range of the Hame-rine Mountains.

Viewed from a distance in the dim twilight of morning, this singular rocky mass had the appearance of being the wall of a large caravanserai; although it was upwards of six hundred feet high, so small did it appear in comparison with the rest of the mountain range behind it. To the west it rises almost perpendicular from the plain, presenting a vast wall of rugged rock of astonishing magnitude. The eastern side rises in a steep slope to about a hundred yards from the summit, when it shoots up in rugged perpendicular masses, pointed at the top, giving the form of a wedge flattened at one side.

As we were still shivering with the cold, we were not sorry to crowd round a large fire which some neighbouring Illyauts had assisted us in making. Mr. Lamb, who had

strolled from our party to view the country, now returned, much pleased with the magnificence of the prospect. In ascending the mountain, he saw in a ravine near the top, some sheep's wool and some bones, and smelt a strong odour so like to that of a lion, that it accelerated his return, hearing that lions were often seen in this neighbourhood.

He passed in the plain a small horde of miserable-looking Illyauts, and was surrounded by the females of the party, who importuned him for alms till they had completely emptied his pockets; some of them seized him by the arm, others kissed his sleeve, and others, in soliciting charity, opened their robes in front, and exposed their bosoms and nearly the whole of their persons to view. This was practised by young and old, and might be intended to excite his commiseration by an appeal to their wretched condition. Such a freedom is always remarkable, when compared with

the distance and fastidious reserve of Oriental females in general. Mr. Lamb says they were mostly good-looking, and all of them had very beautiful teeth.

While he was thus employed in resisting the importunities of the fair beggars, I was besieged by a merry old Illyaut woman, who brought us bread, eggs, and milk, for breakfast. She was not the least abashed by the strange appearance we must have presented, but seemed determined to indulge her curiosity to the utmost; and examining us from head to foot, asked me numerous questions respecting different parts of my dress. She drew my sword, which was a staff regulation, and calling it a *mauli cubaub*, literally, "a roasting skewer," burst out a laughing, not a little delighted with her own wit. She then proceeded to rummage my pockets, and was not satisfied till she had ascertained their separate uses.

The village of Serpool stands in a very

picturesque situation, at the bottom of the N. extremity of the massy wall, with the stream of the Hulwan running in front. The caravanserai is a handsome building, with a small cupola, and the remains of an old serai stand at a little distance. This place is one of the most pleasing we have yet seen.

In the afternoon, as we were proceeding to examine some ancient sculptures, to which the natives attach much importance, we were overtaken by a number of Coords who seemed to be returning from work. We were rather surprized at the time, to observe many of these men salute us in the military mode, by putting their hands to their caps. We afterwards heard, that the troops of the Prince of Kermanshah had been drilled to the European system by some French officers in the service of His Highness. The short but bloody war between the late Prince and the Pasha of Bagdad having ceased with the death of the

former, the greater portion of these troops had been allowed to return to their homes, till their services should be again required. The Coords we saw, formed a part of that army which, two years before, had caused the complete desolation which we witnessed on our march.

One of this party, a stout, fearless-looking ruffian, mounted on an ass, rode up to me, and asked me if I had ever met Davoud Pasha? Upon my replying in the affirmative, he said, with a kind of savage glee, while his wild eye sparkled with triumph as he spoke: "When next you go to Davoud, tell him you have seen one who gave his baratollis (troops) a tremendous beating." This boast appeared to be peculiarly gratifying to his companions, who acknowledged its point by a loud roar of applause.

The sculptures are on the western face, on the limestone ridge, situated near a large gap, about three miles to the S. E. of our tents.

We found the figure of a man, sculptured in low relief, dressed in a long robe, and holding in his hand what had the appearance of a club. This figure is about twenty feet from the bottom of the rock: the tradition of the country calls it a figure of David, and a small square chamber excavated at a considerable height above it, is shown as the place whence David saw Bathsheba, who lived in a neighbouring village, to the ruins of which they pointed. The chamber is called Dekāni Davoud (the shop of David), and the place is held in much respect by the natives, who make pilgrimages to it. We found a number of stones, having pieces of rag attached to them, and many little heaps of stones in the neighbourhood, both of which are common at the shrines of Eastern saints.

April 18.—We proceeded on our journey an hour after midnight. We passed through the stupendous mass of limestone that had so excited our admiration the preceding day,

and which lost none of its grandeur from the distinct outline given by the moon, which was now shining in all her splendour. Having entered this chasm in the rock, we found ourselves in the beautiful valley in which we had seen myriads of cattle a few hours before; but these had all departed, and nothing animate could be seen or heard to break in upon the dead silence and stillness of night. Upon entering the valley, we turned abruptly to the right, and continued our course along the base of the mountain. Numerous rills issued from it, and in their union formed a rapid stream, that traversed the valley to its whole extent. As we proceeded, the principal source of this water could be traced in the mountain, descending from a considerable height, to which the reflection of the moon gave the appearance of quicksilver, as it pursued its serpentine course along the valley.

At dawn we reached the bottom of the

pass, leading over the loftiest range. The scenery at this place is inexpressibly grand; stupendous mountains rising with almost perpendicular abruptness, encompass a small valley, and form a basin, the sides of which are two thousand feet high, and broken into the wildest possible forms. We entered the gorge of this valley a little before dawn, and found it illumined with the fires of large parties of travellers in the bustle of preparation to commence the ascent by the first break of day: they were chiefly Illyauts marching with their families and flocks. By the time we reached the bottom of the pass, we were surrounded by numerous flocks of sheep and cattle; the latter were laden with the mat tents and other property of the wanderers. The ascent, which is two miles in length, occupies somewhat more than two hours. It is mostly very steep, and covered with loose stones, which greatly add to the difficulty and the danger of the ascent. The parapet

wall appears to have been built when the road was originally constructed, and has been broken down in many places by the fall of masses of rock from above. As the present system of the government is not to expend money in works of public utility, the road is in many places nearly impassable. We had to scramble over and between large fragments of rock, and we could not but admire the sagacity with which our horses succeeded in getting over obstacles which to us appeared insurmountable. Our situation was not free from danger, for in ascending we met a large caravan, which we had much difficulty in passing, and were several times nearly thrown down the precipice by the rear mules, which, laden with bulky articles of baggage, and unrestrained by driver or bridle, rushed impetuously past us to join those in advance.

Half way up the pass a military party was stationed, consisting of an officer and

ten men, in the service of the Prince of Kermanshah. One could not but admire the judicious situation that had been selected at a period, perhaps, when the art of war was better understood in this country than it is at present ; for here a handful of men might with ease dispute the passage of a large opposing army. The guard occupied a small square building, with an arched front of Grecian architecture, evidently of considerable antiquity. It is called Pa-ee Takht, (foot of the throne, which name is also given to the pass) and has probably been built originally for the purpose to which it is now appropriated. The natives of the country attribute it to their favourite Khosro, who, they tell us, constructed it as a place of repose after the fatigues of the chase. The guard claimed a present, which we gave on being informed by the muleteer that it was customary. We should have given it the more willingly, had we known at the time

our obligations to them, for it was to the circumstance of their being stationed here, that the Calor banditti had for a while abandoned their hostile intentions towards us.

We at length arrived at the top of this stupendous pass, and paused for a few moments to rest ourselves and cattle, and to enjoy the view which, combining so many magnificent objects, amply compensated for the labour of the ascent. From this height we felt an involuntary shudder in gazing at the yawning abyss beneath. The valley is covered with dwarf oaks, about twenty feet high, which, compared with the surrounding scenery, looked like underwood. The road, formed on the brink of the precipice, was still occupied by crowds of travellers, who, contrasted with the lofty scenery around them, resembled Lilliputians creeping along the narrow ridge at the imminent danger of their lives.

We descended a little after reaching the top of the pass. At the distance of two miles

we reached the caravanserai of Suridage, adjoining a small Coordish village, whence we procured every necessary supply.

Immediately on our arrival, a farrier came to offer his services, which were much wanted, as our horses had suffered considerably since our arrival in the mountains, and particularly from this day's march. Indeed, there could scarcely have been a place better chosen than this for one of his calling.

We encamped close to the serai, in a small basin formed by precipitous mountains, rising from a thousand to fifteen hundred feet on all sides. The ruins of a small square fort, with four bastions, occupy a little mound in the centre of the basin; the tradition of which is, that it was built by the Guebres.

The caravanserai was built by the late Mohummud Ali Meerza, at an expense of three thousand tomauns. The whole of this range of mountains consists of limestone. We were strongly recommended by the

muleteer to go to Kurund, the next stage, but we rejected his advice, having no inclination for a hot ride in the sun ; and we soon found that his reason for wishing us to proceed, was his being obliged to purchase forage for his mules, from the dearth of pasture—every spot admitting of cultivation having been appropriated to tillage.

After breakfast, Mr. Hart went some distance to take a sketch of the pass. While he was thus employed, two of the guard accosted him, and told him that they had received orders to allow no traveller to wander alone in the mountains, on account of the numerous banditti that infest this neighbourhood : he was therefore obliged to put up his drawings, and the guard gave him safe conduct to the tents.

April 19.—The moon rose at two in the morning, and in a short time, our party was ready to start ; but our muleteer was so long in loading, that we did not leave our

ground till near four. The delay was occasioned by a Persian family, who, availing themselves of the protection of our escort, had travelled with us from Bagdad. The party consisted of a man and three females, the eldest twelve years old, and the youngest seven; the girls were carried in a pair of covered paniers, slung across a mule, the two youngest rode together. The morning was raw and cold, and we suffered much from the inconvenience, as the Persian party did not prepare for the march till we were ready to set out, and all the mules having to travel together, we were compelled to wait for them. By threatening the muleteer to withhold a present, we hoped to make him more alert for the future.

The road led through a narrow richly-wooded valley, between two ranges of lofty mountains, rising abruptly, and terminating in rugged precipitous summits; our course was, as usual, south-east, the general direc-

tion of this vast range of mountains. We continued ascending over a very stony rugged road till day-break, when we reached an open level valley, running along the foot of a mountain, called by the natives, *Akooshaun*. It is still covered with snow on the north side, to a considerable distance from the summit.

The stream which waters the valley, takes its rise at the top of this pass, which is called *Surmy*. The ruins of a small fort, like that at the last stage, stand at the top of the pass, which it effectually commands; this, the natives call, *Mauli Giaour*, the "Property of the Infidel;" a Mahometan mode of assigning a date to any building prior to the birth of their prophet.

Two hours from the top of this pass, along a fine level road, brought us to the village of Kurund, where we encamped. We passed several small villages of low, flat-roofed houses, built on the northern side of the

valley, at the bottom of the mountains, which shelter them from the north wind.

The entrance into this valley presented a more cheerful appearance than any place we had yet seen. Heretofore our road had lain through an almost uncultivated waste, though capable of tillage, as might be observed by the partial spaces covered with corn, surrounding the black tents of the Illyauts. This place was, for the most part, highly cultivated, and the present scene, as compared with the past, marked the difference between the pastoral and agricultural state.

Kurund has a southern exposure. It is built on the ascent of the mountain on the north side of the valley, with a ravine behind it, whence issues a fine stream of water, which runs through the centre of the town. It is surrounded with extensive orchards and vineyards, that produce the finest grapes in the whole of the Persian dominions. The gardens are kept in the neatest order, and

every thing indicates an advanced state of agriculture. It was the season for dressing the vines, which they cut close, and dispose in deep trenches. Our tents were pitched in a field, half a mile from the town. Immediately on our arrival, several men who were at work in an adjoining field, came up to us, and entered into conversation with us in the most uncereimonious manner, examining our dress and arms, and asking us numerous questions: a crowd surrounded our tents the whole of the day.

Just as we were sitting down to dinner, the Governor of the town paid us a visit. He was accompanied by his brother and attended by a numerous suite. He apologized for not coming before, having, he said, been hunting in the mountains, but that immediately on seeing our tents, he had hastened to welcome us to Kurund; he said that if he had sooner known of our arrival, he would have sent us some game, which is in great

abundance in the hills. After these civilities, he asked us if we ever tasted spirits. Taking the hint, we told him that we seldom drank any ourselves, but had some at the disposal of our friends. While our servants were bringing in the spirits, the Governor's brother, who seemed to wish to prepare us for what was to follow, said by way of preface, "When a Mahometan drinks at all, it is not with moderation, as Europeans, but to a great excess;" an assertion we had not long reason to doubt. We filled a large breakfast cup with spirits, for the Governor, who hastily finished the draught, and held out the cup to be replenished; this he emptied in as short a time as the first, and again asked for another, but his brother prudently tried to dissuade him from another cup, reminding him that it was against the law. "It is true," replied the Governor, "that spirits are forbidden by our law, but the Franks drink, and I like to follow such

good examples," upon which he quaffed off his third bumper, to prove his admiration of European customs. His brother, who was aware of his failing, now nodded to him to depart, a hint he obeyed with some difficulty, from the effect of these quickly repeated potations. He was at last hoisted into the saddle, and had just power of speech left, to stutter his thanks for the liquor he had already drunk, and for two bottles of whisky, which we gave to his servants for him.

The success which the Governor met with in his visit, brought numbers of his family to us, with similar eulogiums on the excellence of English liquor; but as we had no intention of converting our tents into a drinking-booth, our visitors went away, disappointed to find they had reckoned without their host.

In the evening, we strolled out to look at the town, and went to a neighbouring bury-

ing-ground, situate on an eminence, to enjoy a finer view. Here we observed a crowd assembled round a tomb. Thinking there might be a funeral, we went a little nearer, and saw, not a dead body, but one in a state of almost suspended animation, that of no less a personage than our new acquaintance, the Governor, who, stretched out at his length, with his head reposing on a tombstone, and surrounded by his attendants, was lying totally insensible, from the potent effects of our whisky.

END OF VOL. I.

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Keppel, George Thomas,

Personal narrative of a journey from India to England by Bussorah, Bagdad,
the ruins of Babylon, Curdistan, the court of Persia, the western shore of
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